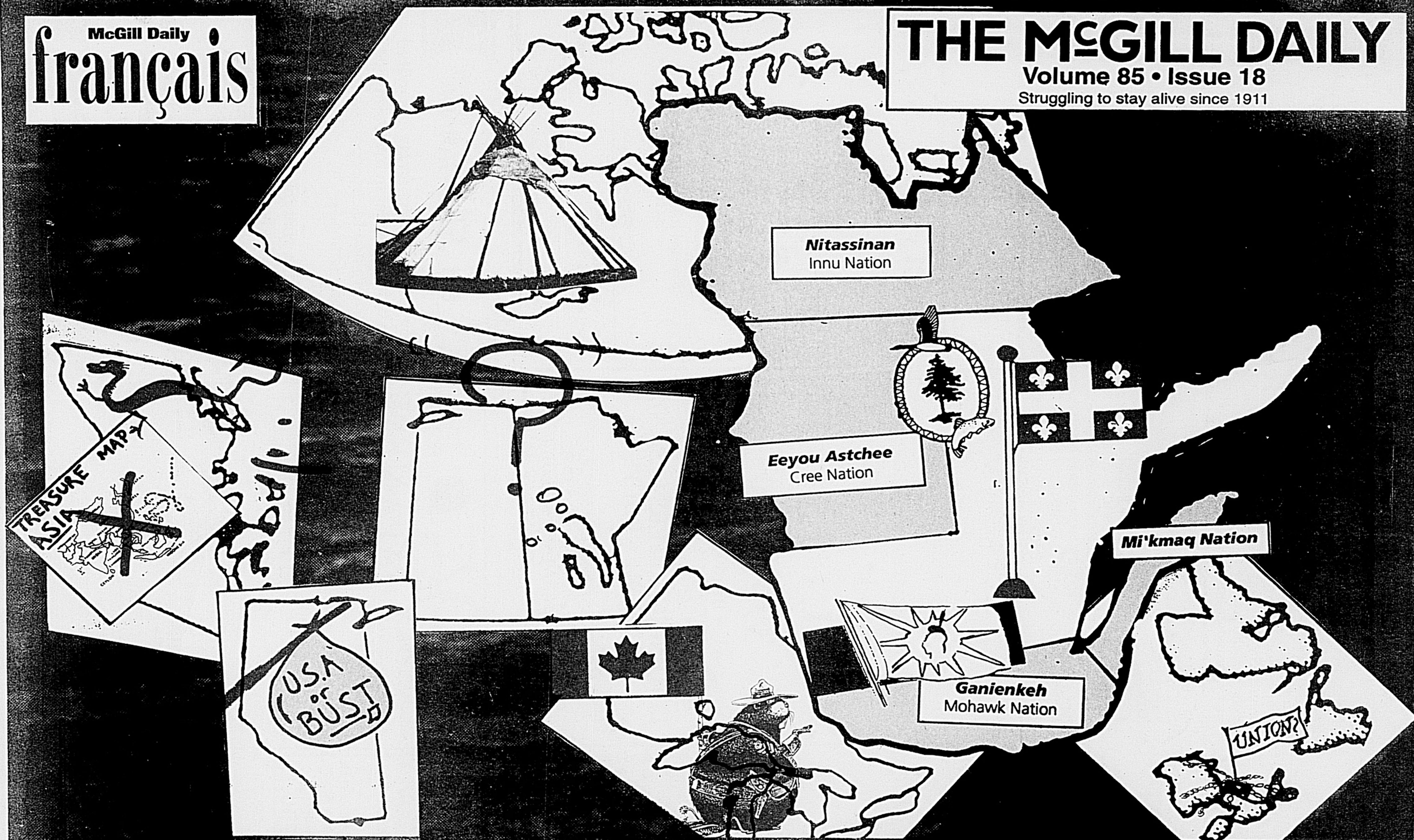


McGill Daily
français

THE MCGILL DAILY

Volume 85 • Issue 18

Struggling to stay alive since 1911



RÉFÉRENDUM 1995

LETTERS

In support of the Daily

TO THE DAILY,

Just a quick note of support to the *Daily* editors, staff and contributors in these trying days. It is disquieting when a student society executive such as this year's SSMU allows itself to be manipulated by a small, disgruntled group of students into enacting something so

irresponsible as the referendum question going to McGill undergraduates next week regarding their funding of the DPS.

For the record, the Post-Graduate Students' Society members are happy as ever to support the DPS. Nor are we questioning our financial commitment in this regard. Further, the higher level of democracy practised within the PGSS would never allow a small group of our members to

succeed even this far with such an embarrassment as this referendum. In the event of an unfavourable result from the referendum, I want to assure you that the PGSS will fight any SSMU presentation to the McGill Board of Governors.

If I can do anything else to help out please let me know.

In Solidarity,
Stephen Targett
President, The Post-Graduate Students' Society of McGill University

Rights and coverage are not bought and sold

One thing you do not get for \$6.70 is coverage. No student or group on campus, no matter how large, has the right to control the content of the *Daily*. As individuals, each student has an equal share in the *Daily* and any action by member(s) of the *Daily*

Publications Society (DPS) to determine its content would violate every other member's right to a free and independent press, which they acquired by paying their fees. The DPS constitution protects this right.

Debate arises because some view the \$6.70 as a subscription fee rather than as a share in a non-profit corporation. They believe they are buying the content of the *Daily*, and object because they have no choice.

The \$6.70 levy creates a forum, free of influence from any political body, in which students can debate issues of importance to them. In return, students are guaranteed the following:

_ to have letters and Hyde Parks published in the *Daily*.

_ to choose who will sit on the DPS Board of Directors, which oversees the financial operations of the *Daily*.

_ to affect coverage in the *Daily* by contributing.

The *Daily* and its staff cannot be faulted if individual members of the DPS do not exercise these rights, which all possess equally. The staff is made up of people who do, and out of this collective emerges the editorial content of the paper.

The *Daily* is one of the many student publications on campus. Together these offer the student a spectrum of views on many issues. The *Daily* is a part of this spectrum which knows no equal. Each publication has its virtues and flaws, but each is integral to ensure the diversity of the whole. The *Daily* is a fundamental part of this vibrant community.

Thomas White
U2 ARTS

EVENTS

Wednesday, October 25

•LBGTM's Bisexual Discussion Group meets in the Women's Union (Shatner 423) at 17h30. Men and Women are both welcome.

Thursday, October 26

•LBGTM's Womyn's Discussion Group meets in the Women's Union (Shatner 423) at 18h. Come out for stimulating discussion.

Friday, October 27

•Financial PCOC Meeting, Room B09 Shatner Building, 14h. For information contact Kelly Remai, VP Finance at 398-6802.

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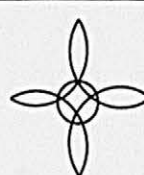
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WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1

UNEASY ENCOUNTERS

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Comment

THE DANGERS OF A YES VOTE

It can be so hard to participate in the debate on the future of Québec, Canada and the First Nations without falling into the rigid confines of sovereigntist-federalist perspectives.

Does rejecting Québec independence mean approving a federal government that prioritises the needs of only two "founding nations" at the expense of everyone else — including the First Nations?

Is a No vote in the provincial referendum tantamount to endorsing federal policies that favour repaying the deficit over supporting needed social programs?

There is no doubt that a No vote on October 30 could be misconstrued as an affirmation of Canada's federalist structure. But it could also mean a lot more.

Think of the alternatives. A majority of Yes votes will result in the creation of a nationalist state designed to promote the cultural identity of the "pure laine" at the expense of all other Quebecers.

Twenty-five years ago, when the sovereignty movement was fueled by the progressive ideals of social egalitarianism, my vote would have been a resounding Yes.

But times change. Today, all evidence points to a movement fueled by ethnicity and a desire to promote one group's

heritage at the expense of all others.

"Being a descendent of Québec's land-clearers who died while defending their homeland, I only have one home and I desire no other. I am convinced that you would not have appreciated strangers coming to your country and trying to change it and impose on you whatever culture at the risk of exterminating your people," writes one individual, apparently unaware of Québec's history with the Cree, Mohawk and Innu First Nations.

Sovereigntist leaders have become equally frank lately. Bloc Québécois leader Lucien Bouchard recently urged white women to have more babies as he lamented his nation's declining birth rate.

"Do you think it makes sense that we have so few children in Québec? We are one of the white races that has the least children. That doesn't make sense," Bouchard stated.

Think of all the people such priorities leave out, all the people who do not fit the image Bouchard wishes to create.

Bloc Québécois MP Philippe Paré may have voiced sovereigntists' opinions most clearly last February. "Just for once, couldn't you let the next referendum be decided by the old-stock Quebecers (Québécois de souche)?" he asked.

Paré was quickly silenced for his statements, but the message is clear: If your ancestors did not arrive 300 years ago, you are not really a Quebecer and you have no place in their society.

A No vote on October 30 should not be construed as a rejection of another group's culture but as a vote of respect for all those who do not fit the exclusive model of the Québécois nation.

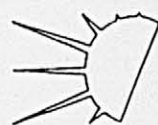
A No vote on October 30 is a vote against the establishment of a multi-tiered society where one group is heralded above all others and the rest are cast aside, or worse, treated as second or third class citizens.

A No vote on October 30 is not a vote for the flawed federal structure of Canada. It is a vote to stop the creation of something far more dangerous.

Robin Perelle

Regardless of **YES**...
or **NO**...

Sovereignty
for First
Nations!



Regroupement
de solidarité avec
les Autochtones



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THE MCGILL DAILY

October 23, 1995

This is not a class struggle... IT'S AN ETHNIC QUEST FOR CONTROL

BY ROBIN PERELLE

Amid the usual cries of ethnic pride and nationalist struggle, an old cry has re-emerged from the sovereigntist camp — the call for a class struggle.

"Our responsibility is to work for the ordinary people, people who make \$25 000 or \$30 000 a year," claimed Guy Chevette, the Parti Québécois' (PQ) house leader, in early October.

"On the one side [you have] the power of money. On the other, [you have] more than a million people committed to sovereignty as an instrument of social change," echoed Lorraine Pagé, president of the Centrale de l'Enseignement de Québec.

Citing economic discrimination as the motivating factor be-

hind the Québec separatist movement is nothing new. Books like *The White Niggers of America* by Pierre Vallières have consistently depicted a rich anglophone elite building Québec on the backs of a working-class French population.

But community organiser Alfie Roberts challenged the recent portrayal of the PQ as a party concerned with working-class needs.

Describing the present wind of the sovereigntist movement as "a capitalist wind," Roberts maintained that the leadership may have changed but their policies have not.

"[The PQ] is doing the same thing as the English did. The English set up English schools and

wanted to exploit the French working-class. But now the French are in power [and establishing] French-only policies. This is the same thing, except now they will be exploiting their own working-class," Roberts asserted.

In short, he described the ongoing political battles of Québec as the "petit bourgeoisie fighting the petit bourgeoisie."

"It is still capitalist and still the working class suffers," he added.

McGill Sociology Professor Maurice Pinard agreed that today's separatist movement is still predominantly led by upper-class intellectuals.

As he wrote in an article entitled *The Class Bases of the Québec Independence Movement*,

"intellectuals have been, and remain to be, the key social stratum around which the independence movement organisations, and in particular the Parti Québécois, have been built."

While Pinard admitted that the PQ's support base has broadened in the last decade to include more workers, he maintained that they have yet to penetrate the party's upper ranks — and thus have little impact on policy and direction.

"As you go up the hierarchy of the PQ, from supporters to Ministers, the proportion of intellectuals keeps increasing all the time," Pinard observed in a recent interview.

"In short, the evidence is unmistakable. The PQ, in its top

leadership levels, is first and foremost a party dominated by persons who had previously been engaged in intellectual occupational roles [like professors]," Pinard stated.

So why have so many workers decided to support the PQ and their quest for an independent state?

Pinard explained that most workers threw their vote behind the PQ after the constitutional amendments put forth in the Meech Lake accord failed to pass.

The Meech Lake accord would have given Québec more powers than the other provinces in recognition of their distinct role as one of Canada's "two founding nations". It did not plan to grant similar privileges to any of the First Nations.

"It took a long time to recruit [the workers]. They tend to be less political, less interested. But finally [the separatists] reached the people with Meech. Their appeals started resonating [because] Meech was seen as a rejection of the Québec population," said Pinard.

Despite the post-Meech influx of workers to the PQ camp, Roberts insisted that the party's policies still reflect upper-class interests.

In particular, he pointed to the fact that since their election last fall the PQ has yet to change any of the old structures established by the previous ruling class of anglophone Quebecers.

In other words, they have not created new positions or opportunities but simply changed the name plate on the desk.

"It's a petit bourgeoisie approach to the national question. But the working class will remain in place," Roberts stated.

Pinard agreed. "Very few parties are workers' movements, they are usually middle-class movements," he said, adding that this is reflected in the PQ's goals.

"They [the intellectuals] are the ones setting the policies. The concentration on independence is just one manifestation of that," he noted.

So what is the attraction of the PQ platform for cultural independence to workers, who have no guarantee that their needs will be taken more seriously in an independent state?

"It is an ethnic appeal. English Canada is rejecting Québec... It is an appeal to them as French Canadians, not as workers," Pinard explained.

"The campaign is on ethnic issues, not social issues," he concluded.

BILL 1 CALLED "A SHAMEFUL DECLARATION"

BY ALEX ROSLIN

"I ask: How can people who claim these rights deny these same rights to us? Where is the logic?"

With those words, Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come went on the attack against Bill 1, the Québec government's

Declaration of Sovereignty, at hearings of the Cree Eeyou-Astchee Commission in Montréal.

The Grand Chief was especially irked by one section of the declaration which claims that the "heart of this land beats in

French" — "this land" is defined as everything from Ungava to the American border.

Just one sentence earlier, the declaration concedes that French colonisers only arrived here 400 years ago.

Coon Come ridiculed the declaration's logic, noting that the Québec government's first presence north of Val d'Or was a brief visit by René Lévesque in 1963.

"There are Crees alive today whose grandparents never saw a white man anywhere in Ungava. We Crees are still the only permanent inhabitants, and are the majority residents, of our traditional lands.

Coon Come called the sovereignty declaration, which Quebecers vote on Oct. 30, "a fraud on Aboriginal peoples" and "a plain attempt to dominate and subjugate our societies, cultures and ways of life."

"This shameful declaration denies our existence," he said.

"This shameful declaration diminishes our status and rights. This shameful declaration is an outright and intentional lie, repeated in 1995 by people who should know better."

David Cliche, advisor to Premier Parizeau on the First Nations file, also spoke before the Commission in Montréal.

He boasted of Québec's relations with Native peoples and promised that sovereignty will improve the "financial independence" of Natives — thanks to the greater participation of Natives in paying for the serv-

ices they receive."

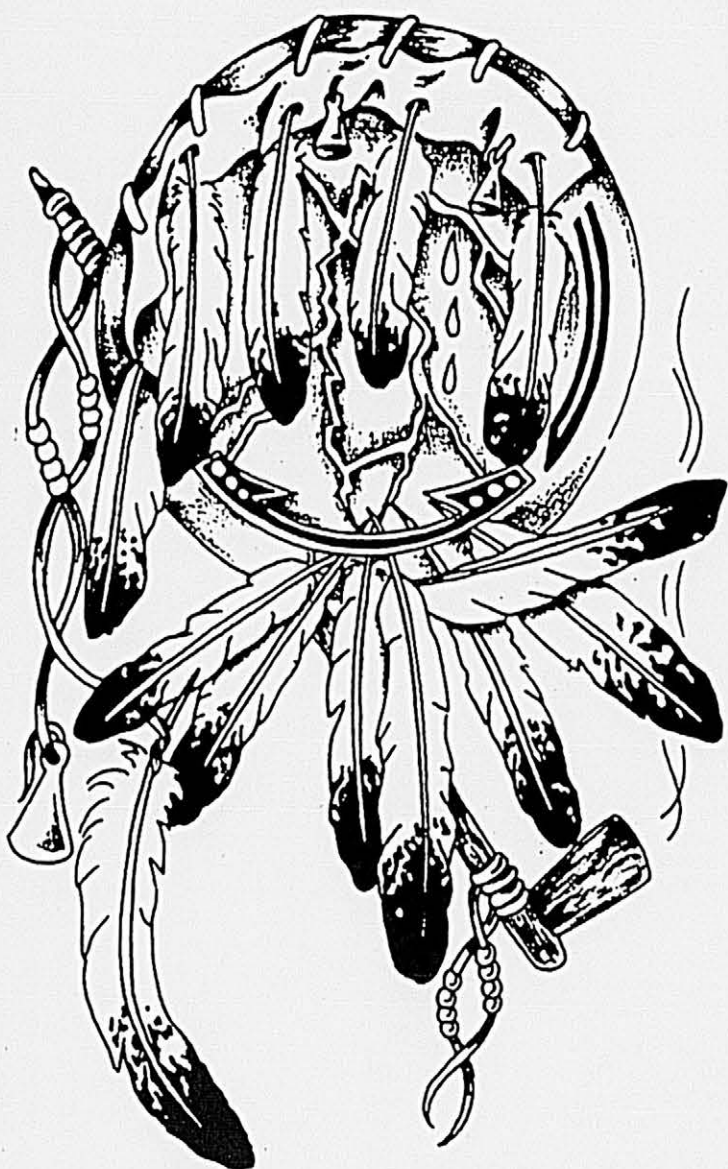
Cliche and the Grand Chief addressed the hearings on Sept. 21, after weeks of travel by Commissioners who have crisscrossed James Bay listening to Cree concerns about Québec separation. The hearings will culminate in a sitting of the Cree Legislature, a body with delegates from all nine communities, in Chisasibi Oct. 17 to 19. A Cree referendum will be held before Québec's Oct. 30 vote.

Crees have as much right as Quebecers to hold a referendum, Coon Come said. "Every argument that the separatists make in their preambles, in their declarations, in their laws, are arguments the Crees can make — 9,000 years better."

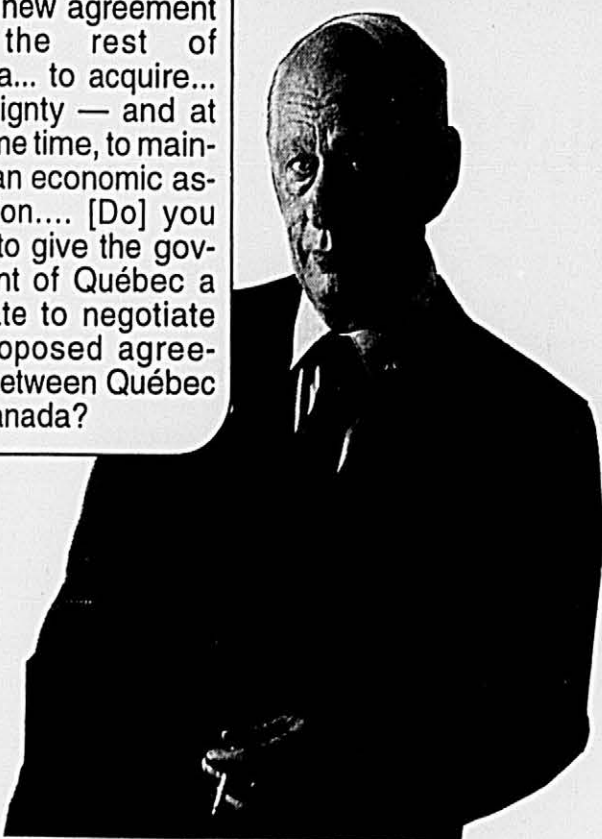
Three representatives of the Cree Nation Youth Council also issued statements criticizing the PQ. They wondered how an independent Québec can be trusted, given past violations of Cree rights by successive Québec governments. "It is the common belief among all Cree that the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement was signed under duress," the youth said.

"Eeyou Astchee-our Land is the lifeline for Eenuch/Eeyouch and we need to start standing up and shouting because they don't listen to conventional means"

Kindly reprinted with the permission of the magazine of Eeyou Astchee, the Cree Nation; *The Nation*. October 6, 1995



"The government of Québec has made public its proposal to negotiate a new agreement with the rest of Canada... to acquire... sovereignty — and at the same time, to maintain... an economic association.... [Do] you agree to give the government of Québec a mandate to negotiate the proposed agreement between Québec and Canada?"



By MERA THOMPSON

Fifteen years ago last May, Quebecers went to the polls to determine the future of their province and the rest of Canada. This month they're at it again.

What is different about this round of negotiations? What has changed in the last decade and a half? And why are we here once again?

"Fear must be overcome to achieve success," urged the opening passage of the 1979 White Paper, the Parti Québécois' plan for sovereignty-association.

Commissioned by then-Premier René Lévesque, the proposal would have replaced the old federal structure with a new constitutional formula allowing Quebecers to continue their "development as a people."

The PQ, seeking greater recognition for Quebecers as one of the two "founding nations" of Canada, insisted that Québec was a province "*pas comme les autres*" (not like the others).

The idea of simply giving Québec special status within Canada was rejected, however, as Lévesque believed that such a situation would effectively paralyse "the entire operation of responsible government."

For the PQ, renewing federalism would either mean further subjecting Québec to the demands of the English majority or sovereignty-association and a new partnership "between equals."

The old deal

Stressing the merits of sovereignty-association, the Lévesque government said their plan, while "freeing Québec from Ottawa's domination," would not break up the pan-Canadian economic community.

As a sovereign state, how-

ever, Québec would be empowered to make decisions autonomously, that is, without being subject to any external parliament.

Through sovereignty, it was anticipated that Québec would acquire all the powers exercised by Ottawa in addition to those powers the provinces already held.

Québec would thus acquire full jurisdiction over all laws and taxes, ending the overlap between federal and Québec services and giving Québec control over its fiscal resources.

As an independent state, Québec would also maintain control over its current borders and retain the power to grant citizenship to all residents within. The PQ added that it had no objections to people keeping dual citizenship with the rest of Canada.

Lévesque's document also assured "minorities" that their rights would be respected. It insisted that anglophones would continue to enjoy the rights accorded to them by law and that native communities would maintain their "societal integrity."

As for the rest of Canada...

The main emphasis of the treaty to be offered to the rest of Canada in the event of a Yes vote focused on ties of an economic nature.

Lévesque's plan called for areas of common action, such as the free circulation of goods and people, as well as a monetary union. It also called for areas of "mutual understanding" in transportation, the labour market and currency.

Now who's being hoodwinked?

IT'S A NEW REFERENDUM BUT THE DEAL HASN'T CHANGED

On the subject of external relations, the 1980 plan foresaw a Québec bound by all treaties to which Canada was then a signatory, fulfilling its duties to NATO and requesting admittance to the United Nations.

The document emphasised the ideal of interdependence over independence throughout, an apparent softening of the Parti's original goal of outright separation.

However, as would be the case in this year's referendum, many people questioned the feasibility of economic ties between the rest of Canada and an independent Québec in 1980.

"It's like suggesting to a somewhat unhappy son that he would be able to break away

hold a second referendum before proclaiming complete sovereignty, the PQ was offering the people a way out even if they voted Yes.

Surprising to many, then, was the tripartite entente signed in June of this year that committed the present PQ government to a very familiar platform of sovereignty-association.

The modified platform was much softer than the unabridged separation published in the 1994 original Draft Bill on the Sovereignty of Québec.

The issue that Quebecers will be voting on in a week's time is now almost identical to the one they rejected in 1980.

The PQ's current stance on common currency, citizenship, international treaties and the free circulation of goods, services, people and capital is almost exactly uniform to their position in 1980.

The PQ again predicts that mutual agreements will be reached on issues like transportation, international representation, financial institutions and fiscal and budgetary policies.

And yet again, the PQ has stressed their belief that the rest of Canada has no choice but to negotiate after a Yes vote.

The PQ is explicit in what it foresees as the division of powers between a sovereign but associated Québec and the rest of Canada.

They demand a fusion of the two states in a "parliamentary assembly" in which Québec

would hold 25 per cent of the seats. They also want a new tribunal appointed to rule on disagreements regarding the interpretation of the treaty. In other words, they want institutions to shadow the current House of Commons and Supreme Court, respectively.

The Québec government expects that the rest of Canada would act in accordance with these guidelines in the best interests of both parties.

Is there a difference?

While finding differences between the two proposals is difficult, the context in which the questions are being posed has changed dramatically in the last 15 years.

According to Daniel Latouche, who contributed to the drafting of the referendum question in 1980, there is an overwhelming pessimism in Québec today that "nothing will ever work."

In fact, the only people who still "believe in dreams" are the same generation that drove the last campaign, said Latouche. The passion that characterised much of the 1980 debate is lacking this time, perhaps as a result of a more cynical younger generation.

One of the only remaining threads connecting the last referendum with the present one seems to be the politics of recognition. In the words of Latouche, "Quebecers want to be recognised as an equal partner, not an equal province."

"Do you agree that Québec should become sovereign, after having made a formal offer to Canada for a new economic and political partnership, within the scope of the bill respecting the future of Québec and of the agreement signed on June 12, 1995?"

The issue on which Quebecers will vote in a week's time is now almost identical to the one they rejected in 1980.

from home and be able to keep his father's credit card," complained one prominent Québec businessman at the time.

1995: Something funny happened on the way to the ballot box...

When the current referendum campaign began last year it was initially quite different from that of 1980.

New PQ Premier Jacques Parizeau had, in the 1980 campaign, objected to having a referendum at all. "Québec did not enter confederation by referendum; I don't see why it needs a referendum to leave," he stated.

At the time, he had also argued that sharing a common currency "dramatically hindered any kind of political sovereignty."

He had in turn objected to Lévesque's "money back guarantee." Parizeau thought that since Lévesque had planned to



WHEREFORE MCGILL?

By JACQUELINE REIS

McGill's future in a sovereign Québec

How anglophone institutions, and particularly one of Canada's oldest, most competitive and most deficit-ridden universities, will fit into a sovereign Québec is a question many members of the McGill community will ask themselves as they approach the polls next Monday.

Voters have yet to be provided with a clear answer on this question. The Parti Québécois has not specifically stated its priorities concerning McGill, and McGill has yet to publicise any plans in response to a Yes vote.

This is not to say that both sides have not thought about a post-sovereignty McGill, but getting a comment on this issue along with many others in the time leading up to the referendum is a tricky task. Students on neither side of the referendum have successfully pushed leaders to elaborate on their plans for McGill, whether in terms of admission fees, attracting professors or the composition of the student body.

The official view

Representatives from both official referendum committees have found common ground in McGill: their view of a post-Yes McGill is the same as their view of the present.

"I don't see a lot of change for McGill," said Simon Bégin, press secretary for Québec Minister of Education Jean Garon. "McGill is not disposable - it is not like that, nobody thinks it is."

William Cosgrove, member of the Committee of Quebeckers for the No and English-speaking vice president of the Québec Liberal Party, framed his answer differently.

"First of all, I believe the people of Québec in their wisdom are going to vote to stay in Canada, so it becomes a very hypothetical question. . . I believe that McGill will continue to exist [and] that it has always played a significant role in the development of Québec," said Cosgrove.

In terms of finances, Bégin said that the formula by which Québec distributes money among its universities will not change in the event of a Yes vote. "There is no discrimination. The referendum doesn't make any new way of looking at the ways the [funding] forms come up."

But what if the total amount allotted to universities shrinks under the pressure of

sovereignty?

"Certainly one of the problems of a sovereign Québec [is] it will be financially strapped," stated Cosgrove. Such circumstances could lead the province to raise tuition fees in general and out-of-province fees in particular.

Bégin does not think that this will necessarily be the case, saying that "often it is based on agreements between the two provinces."

"People will cut rationally as to what is good for all students," he concluded.

Federalists may not be much better off, according to Cosgrove.

"University financing is a complicated subject. The rest of Canada, of course, already has higher fees at university in general."

Throughout Canada we're going to see fees rising, placing the costs on the users."

Bégin, in discussing research grants, proposed that research institutions like McGill might be better off funded by a sovereign Québec than facing Human Resource Minister Lloyd Axworthy's notorious reforms.

When asked whether sovereignty might result in an economic crunch forcing McGill to focus on income-generating research projects rather than undergraduate teaching, Bégin replied, "The institution itself has the responsibility to maintain an equilibrium, a balance... the needs of the people for higher education won't change from day to day."

Who's on campus

Bégin admitted that McGill may initially have trouble attracting and maintaining a high level of strong professors and students. "Maybe there will be some departure of some people that don't accept the change," said Bégin, but he expected it to level out eventually.

Bégin expects McGill's tradition of attracting and accepting a large number of international students to remain

the same despite a change of nation. "I think the attraction with other students is made by the quality of education and the reputation of the institution. The colour of the flag does not make a big difference," said Bégin.

Cosgrove hoped this will be true. "One has to hope that the sovereign Québec is going to be

He stressed that other universities in Québec "wanted us to stay exactly what we were" during his time in office. "If we became a French language university we would cut in on their turf. We were opening a door to the outside world."

He added that "We are a training school for graduate people, and that's

extraordinarily valuable for them... "We've got the best library. With all those good relationships... when it comes to an issue of squeezing McGill, then the other people say no, no, no."

Professor Jangdish Handa of the Economics department agreed but added that cuts "need not

happen through funding formulas but may happen through developmental grants and encouraging initiatives." In other words, McGill's overall funding may be safe, but special projects may be in jeopardy.

Handa also pointed out that while Québec and the rest of Canada may initially agree not to impose international student fees on each other's students, Canada and the U.S. have already set the precedent for breaking such an agreement.

Thomson and Handa also foresee problems in attracting potential McGill professors and international students to a sovereign Québec.

"Québec would be a smaller country. It would also be quite clearly a French-speaking country. My belief is that under those circumstances, attracting the best candidates would be more difficult," said Handa.

"I think [sovereignty] will be a consideration for people coming to work at McGill... One of the problems we had in political science is getting people to come in as junior professors because the situation's so insecure," Thomson commented.

"The tendency would be that we would become more

isolated... we would have fewer foreign students," he concluded, adding that McGill will have fewer students period, referendum or not.

"I recall when I was a student in the '40s and '50s, McGill was a much smaller university... and then we increased because many more people were coming to university, people whose families had never had a university education before... for the moment we're on a downswing. We have to get rid of the deficit, with or without the referendum."

"McGill's financial situation has always been precarious," noted Handa.

Personally speaking

Political science Professor Richard Schultz isn't sure a Yes vote would be so terrible.

"I'm afraid I see more dire straits for McGill if there's a No vote," said Schultz.

"I just think it's more likely that in the event of a No vote the PQ will still be in power, and they're going to have to cut public spending... I also think, then, that anglophone institutions face the punitive reaction, that our cutting will be more rigorous than it would be otherwise as a result of the perceived anglophone voting."

Schultz perceives this as a problem for Montréal as a whole.

"This government is not the least bit interested in Montréal. They've written off Montréal."

Perhaps the best indicators of what will come of McGill are the plans of individual community members to remain within or leave Québec.

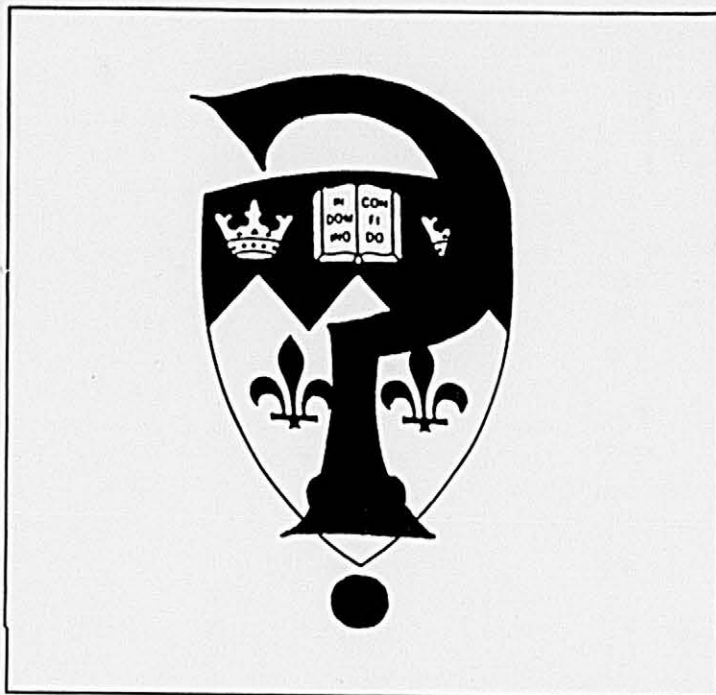
Cosgrove, a McGill graduate, plans to stay. "Once I came to McGill, I stayed here and made it my home. Yes, I would stay."

Handa and Thomson would stay as well. However Thomson admitted "I might think hard about it."

"It's very hard to move beyond a certain stage," said Handa. "I like Montréal, I like McGill."

Schultz has other plans. "I would leave at the first opportunity. I'm Canadian," he stated.

What it all comes down to, however, is the referendum. As Cosgrove stated, "The ultimate thing is that those who are eligible to vote and are at McGill and want the tradition to continue... can be sure that they don't have to face any of these hypothetical [situations] by getting out to vote No."



GRAPHIC BY SAM MURPHY

as open-minded as it has been in the past and that this will attract [good] minds."

Bégin wouldn't commit to whether or not McGill students would be expected to know French either upon admission or graduation, but he did state, "We think Québec should be as French as Italy is Italian."

Ah, tenure

Unrestricted by the confines of an official committee or public relations, Principal Bernard Shapiro would not comment on McGill's future in a sovereign Québec until after the referendum. But three past and present tenured professors specialising in Québec and Canadian affairs gave their best guesses on the subject.

Dale Thomson, a retired political science professor, agreed with Bégin and Cosgrove that there would be little drastic change.

"No one will want to rock any boats," said Thomson, who was once McGill's vice principal of planning and resources. Of his experience in that position he said, "We had many more allies in Québec than I actually realised, if you look at the number of people in the PQ who studied at McGill, especially through Law or Macdonald [Campus]."



A crowd of over 3000 gathered at a rally on Oct. 15, 1970 in support of the FLQ

By JACQUELINE REIS

The Québec sovereignty movement is not what it used to be.

As Jacques Parizeau invokes ethnicity to justify independence, the *Daily* thought it would be interesting to take a look back at the progressive ideals that built a very different movement 25 years ago.

October 1970 is best remembered for the actions of the separatist Front de Libération du Québec (FLQ).

In the interest of promoting the rights of francophone workers, several FLQ members kidnapped British diplomat James Richard Cross and, days later, Québec Labour and Immigration Minister Pierre Laporte, who was eventually murdered.

Pierre Trudeau's federal government responded by invoking the War Measures Act, effectively suspending Canadians' civil rights and sending the country into crisis.

Excerpts from the FLQ's manifesto, as published in the *Daily* in 1970, included expressions of solidarity with natives, American blacks and Puerto

Ricans and "all struggles being waged by people who are victims of American imperialism."

The document also called for the creation of a "real" workers party and denounced the capitalist monopolisation of the major means of communication.

Both the McGill Faculty Union and the Montréal Central Council of the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CNTU) were among the groups who supported the FLQ manifesto.

These two groups also supported the Front d'Action Politique's (FRAP's) position that the FLQ's violent methods were forced upon them.

The CNTU's resolutions in support of FRAP also expressed "faith in democracy as practiced by labour unions, but not in democracy dominated by an economic dictatorship."

The *Daily* also stood in solidarity with the FLQ. A "Comment" that appeared on Oct. 13, 1970 stated, "To bring local control to the people, to destroy the system which breeds economic slavery of nearly all citizens, which

fosters psychological alienation in everyone; this is the essence of the manifesto..."

"Elitist governments cannot possibly understand the movement among the people, nor can capitalism cater to the wants of an advanced industrial, exploited mass," wrote Charles Griffin.

In 1970, the "industrial, exploited mass" was French Canadians. In 1970, between 80 and 85 per-cent of Montréal's population consisted of salaried workers, according to Paul Cliche, president of FRAP's secretariat.

While the remaining small upper-class of managers and owners were largely anglophones, the majority of workers in Québec were francophones.

"We want Québec to be unilingual French, but not because we don't want to cooperate with other ethnic groups — on the contrary... The workers have to learn the language in order to work — otherwise they will be exploited," FRAP spokesperson Gilles Vignier told the *Daily* in September 1970.

FRAP, the only opposition to

Montréal Mayor Jean Drapeau's Civic Party, "was founded to remedy this lack of workers' representation," said Cliche, who added that 96 per cent of Montréal's municipal representatives were members of the upper class.

"The time has come for the worker to exercise his legitimate power," he added.

"FRAP's main objective is to transform a purely formal democracy — the election of deputies every four years — to a democracy whereby the workers participate daily in decision making that affects their lives," Cliche explained.

"In order to do this, a more effective decentralisation of government is necessary. The worker must become actively participating in a political collectivity," said Cliche.

"We don't take the liberation of Québec from its national standpoint but from its social standpoint," said Vignier. "All



A soldier stands on guard in the streets of Old Montreal

workers are victims of U.S. economic domination; English workers are just as much victims as French workers."

Then-FRAP candidate Adele Williams stressed that FRAP is "socially oriented. Nationalism is not involved."

Therein lies the difference between the Parti Québécois' present referendum campaign and the campaign of 1970.

Twenty-five years ago, separatists argued that a separate Québec would help all Quebecers live more freely because it would be better able to deal with capitalist exploitation as an independent state.

Parizeau, on the other hand, makes sovereignty a matter of pride. He uses nationalism to manipulate the emotions of Quebecers, and nationalism is a dangerous tool.

As a recruiting message, it alienates many sectors of the population, and as a political platform it does not guarantee that a sovereign Québec will be an improvement for all Quebecers.

Whereas the separatists in 1970 stood side by side with First Nations as victims of capitalist exploitation, the PQ now refuses to recognise native self-government as they campaign for their own.

Whereas the FLQ and other groups struggled to give Quebecers greater self-determination in the name of further liberation, the PQ is fighting for sovereignty in the name of Québécois nationalism, a concept that seems to be expressed best when spoken in French.

That is why the *Daily* changed its stance on sovereignty since 1970. Not all movements are created equal.

First Nations commemorate 503 years of resistance THE OTHER SIDE OF COLUMBUS DAY

By REBECCA MCGUIRE

For some, October 12, 1492 represents the day that Columbus 'discovered' America, — celebrating it as 'Columbus Day' For many, however, the event represents the beginning of First Nation genocide, the subsequent enslavement of African people, and the onset of a racially prejudiced society.

This was the view taken by those who organised and attended the rally of "503 Years of Resistance: 1492-1995" on October 12 in Philips Square, regarding Columbus Day as a day of remembrance and outrage, not of celebration.

According to Nina Segalowitz, one of the organisers, the rally was meant "to give people a taste of the issues, ideas and atrocities that have been happening for the past 503 years."

Jointly organised by le Cir-

cle des Premières Nations de L'UQUAM, the Concordia Latin America Committee, Indigenous Peoples International, Food Not Bombs, and le Regroupement de Solidarité Avec les Autochtones, the protest was of a diverse nature.

Many signs and fliers from those pleading to "Free Mumia" to the flyer asking people to protest "Le Boucher de Tiananmen," were passed around.

A member of the Concordia Latin America Committee claimed that "it is important for people to voice their discontent in a sense of people coming together on different issues, not just focused on one thing."

Joe David from Khanesetake maintains that "the really important part is that people get more active and do

things like this, get the message out and keep talking... understanding each other and accepting the differences between us and maybe working out solutions without going to war."

David speaks from experience. As was a warrior in the Oka standoff in 1990, in which the Mohawk nation protested the building of a golf course on their land, David faced a potential 17 year sentence.

While the October 12 rally was peaceful, the messages sent were often charged with emotion. Jeanne Mance Charlish gave a moving speech in which she demanded: "503 years — how could this have happened?"

In an article passed around to the demonstrators, writer Paul McKenna wrote about the prevalence of the notion that Columbus 'discovered'

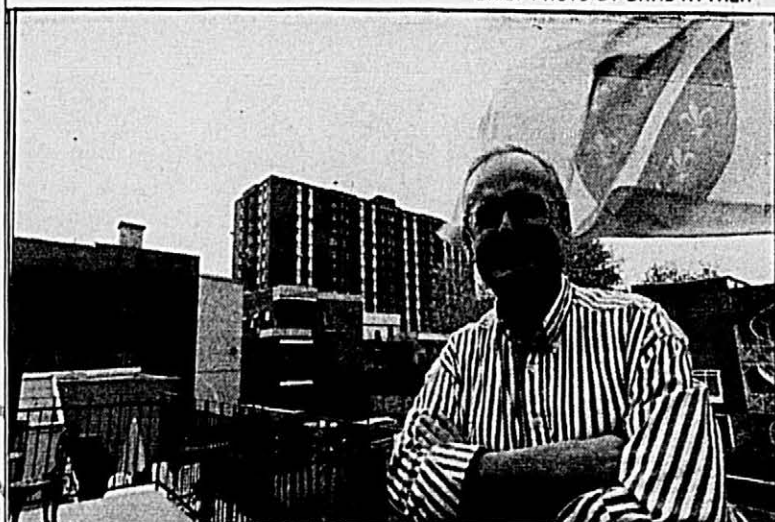
America. "The accent on discovery fails to acknowledge the existence and integrity of First Nations that inhabited the Americas for at least 10 000 years prior to the conquest."

To bring the point home, the rally was held in front of The Bay store — which is celebrating the 350th Anniversary of the Hudson's Bay Company.

David noted the similarity between celebrating the history of the Hudson's Bay Company and Columbus day. "They're celebrating something that has to do with the subjugation of the North, the environment, and Native people — that's how The Bay became a nation-wide corporation, and that's how empire-building works — empires are built on the backs of a lot of poor people, slaves, and Native people."

SOVEREIGNTY WITHOUT INDEPENDENCE

DAILY PHOTO BY DAVID RYTHIER



Pierre Vallières has been active in radical circles in Québec for over 30 years. A Front de libération du Québec (FLQ) activist in the late 1960s, he fought for an independent, socialist Québec. More recently, he has campaigned on behalf of the people of Bosnia - Herzegovina.

A journalist by profession, Vallières has written over a dozen books, including *Nègres blancs d'Amérique*, *L'exécution de Pierre Laporte*, *Les héritiers de Papineau*, *Le devoir de résistance* and *Homosexualité et subversion*, some of which have been translated into English.

When the *Daily* caught up with him, he explained why the current referendum campaign bores him silly. He talked about the emptiness of Parti Québécois (PQ) rhetoric, the importance of solidarity, and the difference between independence and "nationalism" or "sovereignty".

Daily: In *Le devoir de résistance*, you wrote that the "independence" of the PQ, of the Bloc Québécois, was an independence "without content". What did you mean by that?

Pierre Vallières: It's crazy to create a nation-state, to endow Québec as a nation-state, with no project for society, with no social project that would be different from the neo-liberalism already practised by Canada, by the United States, by all the industrialised countries. I don't understand why the leaders of the PQ propose, on the one hand, the independence of Québec — in fact that's a word they don't use, they talk about the "sovereignty" of Québec — and on the other hand, the complete submission to the U.S.'s economic rule.

The PQ call people to liberty — individual, personal, collective, social and cultural liberty — but at the same time they ask them to long for, in the economic domain, the abdication of all responsibility, even the refusal to imagine an economic model that would be different from the one they are bringing.

You have to deregulate the state, you have to abolish social politics: education, child care, health care, universities. All that to return to the old pre-war model. That means, those who can pay can have it, those who can't pay will find themselves in the street.

So it's this system that the leaders of the PQ consider sacred. But the same people say to us: We have to vote yes in the referendum because we want to be masters of our own destiny. But what destiny are they talking about? What will it change the day after the referendum, when the Yes has won by one per cent or the No has won by one per cent?

Nothing will change in the social content of the population's daily lives, no matter their language, their history, their origin. Nothing will change. Just one thing will change. That's the illusion, the illusion that English Canadians and the Québécois constitute nations that have histories as independent or autonomous nations.

So independence is not really a question of nations?

Linguistic difference cannot make two nations. It cannot substitute itself for the fact that there are no real Québécois or Canadian nations. They have no identity. There is a North American identity. This reality has not changed.

The Québec economy, the Canadian economy are intimately tied, not to say welded, to the American economy. And even the U.N., there was a U.N. study that showed in the '70s that Canada, including Québec, was the country the most dependent on a single other country in the whole world. Together

Québec and Canada were more totally dependent on the United States, economically, than Georgia or Azerbaijan were on Russia during the time of the Soviet Union. To talk about independence in this context is laughable. Canada is the little valet of the United States. And Québec, the Parti Québécois proposes, can be a second valet. That's two valets in place of one.

So in this context, I am not wrapped up in the referendum question and all the rest, all the populist discourses about the Québécois soul, the language. It really sounds like what I heard when I was young, about faith, the religious language that was our essence. All that seems to come from such a conservative discourse that... I tell you, I'm very bored. The referendum is not a priority for me, currently. It's not a priority at all.

I find that there is even less at stake than there was in the 1980 referendum. In 1980 the social stakes were still present. The social stakes were present in the indépendantiste movement of the '60s, in the '70s, and some things remained in 1980. But today we have no social stakes. And I remember in the '70s, there were many ties between the francophone left and the anglophone left, from Toronto and from Montréal. There was a magazine, *The Last Post*, that assembled the political left of Québec and an independent left — not the NDP's Waffle left, but an independent left. We understood each other beyond historic, linguistic or religious origin. As I saw when I was in the former Yugoslavia, in Bosnia-Herzegovina and elsewhere... nationalism, I don't believe in it, I don't believe in it at all.

In the discourse of the Parti Québécois, they seem to want to adhere to a territorial conception, a conception of the state that is a democratic state more than a nation-state. But in practice the Parti Québécois gives the impression of a nation-state, and its party, the Parti Québécois, is a national party. All its representatives are whites, old-stock francophones, and you see no representatives among them from other communities, from other nationalities, whether native, anglophone or other. I find that the image, the symbol is very important especially in the ref-

erendum period. Since the Parti Québécois has existed — for 25 years — I haven't seen a will to bring together the different constituents of the Québécois collectivity. I find it to be a waste of time.

How is the history of Québec being presented in the campaign?

No one speaks about the October Crisis. Pierre Laporte died the 17th of October, that's 25 years ago this year. So that that time doesn't disturb the image of the referendum, they don't speak about it in the newspapers. They speak about it as little as possible. It could displease. But it was a major event in the history of Québec.

They're holding a referendum on the future of Québec and Canada, but we can't speak about what has marked the history of Québec. They haven't talked about the 1837-38 Rebellion. Have you read a summary of the history of Québec anywhere? The *Gazette* yesterday was intelligent enough to publish a summary of the history. But they should have been intelligent enough to talk about it all year long, make use of television.

Nobody knows where we're from, we didn't grow on the banks of the St. Lawrence. We come from the wars fought by France, Great Britain, Ireland, Spain. We come from French and European imperialism. We come from the conquest of America. We come from what Christopher Columbus did, what followed him. It is necessary to remember them and what they did to native people, even though it's the biggest genocide in history. Between 14 and 20 million people is quite a lot.

You don't run a referendum campaign on the future of a

people, on the future of a country when you haven't done any education for 30 years, when you abolish history in general teaching, and then ask a people to reflect on its identity as a people in the 21st century. And the people don't even know the Berlin Wall fell in '89. It's not the Wall of Pink Floyd, which fell at the same time. What's the difference: the Berlin Wall and the Wall of Pink Floyd? For most of the world there's not a big difference.

The young are growing up in a completely artificial world, a world of television, a world of images, without history, without the testimony of people who lived more than five or six years before.

You speak of a social project. What would you like to see?

A social project for me is a social project based on solidarity. That's my personal understanding. We cannot, as human beings, live in a way that is unaware of what surrounds us. What surrounds us is the old reality: Unemployment, misery, AIDS, insanity, health problems, economic poverty, the defacement of cities, pollution — the sacrifice of social life to the ends of speculation, whether it is real estate or something else. It's bigger than your district, it's bigger than your city.

There is also solidarity with humanity. It's obvious that one individual, one person, cannot be concretely solidaire 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, with all the inhabitants of the planet Earth. But you have to be open, sensitised to those who live, those who suffer elsewhere, and to try to understand how the powers, the great powers, organise to-

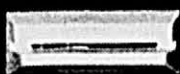
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on
page 17**



Paris
1975



BILLET DE
CORRESPONDANCE



UN SEUL BILLET DE CORRESPONDANCE
PAR PERSONNE

La souveraineté des signes de «peace»

De l'Urgence de Guy Laforest

« Pour retrouver une Amérique qui nous convienne, il faudra la réinventer »

LITTÉRATURE
Fred Mérand

En ces temps de campagne référendaire, le fédéraliste-acharné-pourfendeur-du-nationalisme-étroit-des-souverainistes et le séparatiste-à-tout-prix-nationaux-revanchard s'opposent sans cesse, pour un oui ou un non. *De l'urgence*, le dernier livre du politologue Guy Laforest, leur donne une belle leçon de rationalisme et d'ouverture d'esprit.

Ce livre consiste en un regroupement de textes écrits au cours de la dernière année par le professeur Laforest qui est, soit dit en passant, un ancien étudiant de McGill. Il exploite la thématique de la souveraineté principalement à travers deux thèmes. Il critique premièrement la Constitution de 1982, laquelle a été imposée aux Québécois et Québécoises. Parallèlement, il explique la nécessité pour les souverainistes d'élaborer un projet de société « noble, ouvert et pluraliste », dépassant ainsi la Conquête et son lot de ressentiments.

Les théories libérales et démocratiques forment la matrice de sa réflexion. Dans une optique de tolérance, le but de M. Laforest est de réconcilier individu et collectivité. *De l'urgence* n'est surtout pas une vile propagande politique; il s'agit d'un acte de réflexion sur la société québécoise, ses enjeux et défis.

Sa vision d'un Québec souverain est plutôt édifiante. Il la décrit d'ailleurs comme « une communauté politique autonome, une société originale, distincte, qui aspire à vivre la modernité principalement en français, en Amérique. » Son Québec revêt « un caractère polyethnique, pluricommunautaire et multinational ». Son argument s'inscrit ainsi dans un catégorique refus du nationalisme ethnique.

De l'urgence ressemble à un modèle exemplaire d'éducation civique. « Accès à l'universel, parité politique avec les communautés anglophones et les nations autochtones, humanisme généreux » sont

des idéaux continuellement ramenés au centre du débat. Son idée de souveraineté moderne, se défend avec une séduction et une irréprochabilité qui lui sont propres. C'est celle d'une nouvelle « Cité libre ». Elle est d'ailleurs partagée par de nombreux intellectuels dont le dramaturge Robert Lepage et le chroniqueur Daniel Latouche. Guy Laforest ne cache d'ailleurs pas son appui au bilinguisme dans

immorale, parce qu'elle restreint le Québec dans l'exercice de pouvoirs essentiels à son développement. Guy Laforest résume tout son argument en une formule lapidaire : « Au Québec, la fédération n'existe plus. » L'identité québécoise, et non la nation, se voit plus menacée que l'opinion populaire veut bien le croire. En cela, son analyse rejoint paradoxalement la pensée de plusieurs intellectuels anglophones tels James Tully ou Neil Bissoondath.

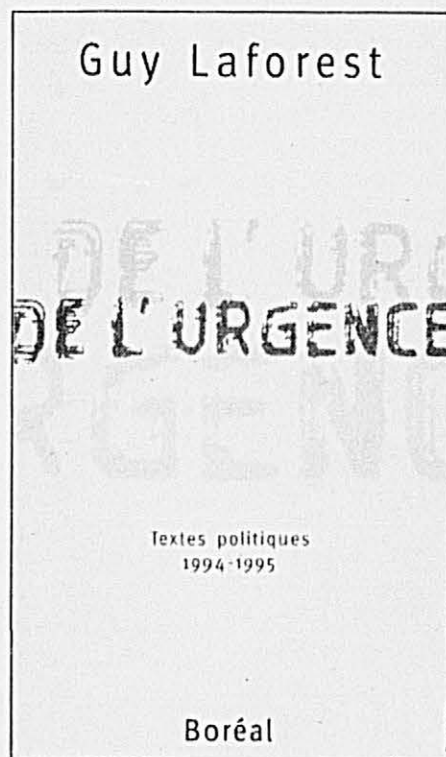
Nonobstant son originalité et ses qualités, cette critique de la Constitution de 1982 se révèle un peu faible. Intéressante et pertinente, elle tourne parfois à l'obsession. La Constitution canadienne, sous la plume acérée du professeur, devient l'unique cause des maux du Québec. C'est redondant et insuffisant. Ce malaise est amplifié par le fait que l'auteur a tendance à se répéter et que son style, certes précis, n'est certainement pas « olé-olé ».

Malgré tout, *De l'urgence* aura marqué l'esprit des lecteurs et lectrices parce qu'il aura traité avec brio de cette damnée Constitution. Il demeure à ce jour aussi une des critiques les plus complètes, sérieuses, décapantes et accessibles sur le sujet. Cela pourrait bien servir dans les rudes négociations qui suivront un hypothétique OUI.

Là où Guy Laforest se démarque, là où il charme, c'est lorsque il propose différentes orientations qu'un Québec souverain devrait emprunter. Si les politicien-nes souverainistes montraient autant d'intelligence et d'ouverture que lui, et les fédéralistes, autant que Charles Taylor, il est permis de croire que le problème relié à la question nationale ne se poserait même pas. Ceci n'étant évidemment pas le cas, le Québec aura à voter lundi prochain.

Conséquent à lui-même, Laforest votera OUI le 30 octobre. Un projet comme le sien, semble attirant et raisonnable; il est susceptible d'en convaincre plusieurs.

De l'urgence, de Guy Laforest aux Éditions du Boréal, 200 pages, 24.95\$.



l'affichage, à une Chambre haute québécoise où seraient surreprésentées les minorités, de même que son attachement à une certaine idée du Canada.

Cette idée du Canada, il en porte en effet le deuil. La légitimation légale et philosophique de la sécession du Québec, il la trouve dans les changements constitutionnels de 1982. La « Constitution de Trudeau » est illégitime, car le Canada fut alors « redéfini sans nous. » Elle est

La SSJB-M craint un déclin de la population francophone de l'île

Do you remember when we were French?

NOUVELLE
Fred Mérand

Si parfois vous passez par la rue Sherbrooke, dans le centre-ville est, peut-être l'avez-vous vue. C'était une grande affiche, proclamant que « d'ici 2010, le français sera minoritaire à Montréal » et que « seule la souveraineté pourrait empêcher cela. » (Vérifier le texte exact). La Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste (SSJB-M) était l'instigatrice de cette campagne. L'affiche a récemment été retirée, « pour faire place aux nouveaux panneaux du OUI », selon la SSJB-M.

La SSJB-M se défend de vouloir faire peur à la population. En fait, elle se base sur des calculs de Statistique Canada. Selon ces chiffres, le nombre des francophones vivant sur l'île de Montréal aurait chuté de 61,8 p.cen en 1986 à 58 p.cen en 1991. Si une telle tendance se maintenait, la population

francophone ne représenterait plus que 50,4 p.cen des habitants de l'île en 2001, et deviendrait par conséquent minoritaire dans les années suivantes.

La SSJB-M croit donc en la souveraineté afin de remédier au « déclin du français à Montréal ». Selon ses dires, celle-ci pourrait donner « la marge de manœuvre nécessaire au gouvernement pour agir ».

Malheureusement, objectent plusieurs, si la part des francophones de naissance dans la population



PHOTO BY LUCY ATKINSON

montréalaise décroît, c'est dû à un tout autre problème : l'étalement urbain. Effectivement, de 1986 à 1991, le nombre d'habitants de l'île de Montréal n'est passé que de 1 752 582 à 1 775 871, soit une très légère augmentation de 1,3 p.cen. S'il y a moins de francophones à Montréal, c'est tout simplement parce que ceux-ci vont s'établir en banlieue. Selon

les aveux mêmes de la SSJB-M, on trouve quand même, « dans la grande région métropolitaine, pour dix résidents, sept francophones. »

français

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D'autres déplorent également la vision réductrice utilisée pour définir le terme francophone. En effet, pour la nationaliste SSJB-M comme pour la fédérale Statistique Canada, un-e francophone est strictement de langue maternelle française. Sont donc exclus les enfants d'immigrants étant allés à l'école française, ainsi que les gens qui ont appris et utilisent fréquemment cette langue. Soulignons cependant que la SSJB-M se fait l'apôtre de « l'éducation en français pour tous, et [du] droit de tous à la connaissance de la langue de la majorité. »

OUI OU NON

La communauté homosexuelle reste unie

NOUVELLE
Anne CaporalPHOTO
Derek Fung

Nous nous engageons à garantir les droits civils et politiques des individus, notamment le droit à la justice, le droit à l'égalité et le droit à la liberté. Cette affirmation extraite du Projet de loi sur l'avenir du Québec paraît être de bonne augure pour la communauté homosexuelle du futur Québec.

Cependant, cette communauté a décidé de ne pas prendre position dans le débat référendaire.

« La question nationale dépasse nos droits et nos libertés dépassent la question nationale », affirme Michael Hendricks, coordinateur de la Table de concertation des gais et lesbiennes du Grand Montréal. En effet, au regard de la question référendaire, la communauté homosexuelle est divisée, tout comme le reste de la population. Le vote ne se fait pas sur la base de l'orientation sexuelle — ni sur celle des intérêts de la communauté — mais bien sur les convictions politiques de chaque membre de la communauté. C'est pourquoi

la Table de concertation a décidé de ne pas prendre de parti officiel dans la question référendaire. « On va rester non-partisan car on ne veut pas détruire notre solidarité. Notre communauté est divisée par des lignes linguistiques mais notre combat reste le même. On veut laisser nos mains ouvertes et on ne veut pas être puni comme groupe pour l'éventuelle position qu'on aurait prise », ajoute M. Hendricks.

Il n'empêche que cette Table de concertation s'est fixé un objectif politique clair. « Pour nous, le travail démarre le lendemain du Référendum. On n'a pas encore gagné nos droits. Même si on a

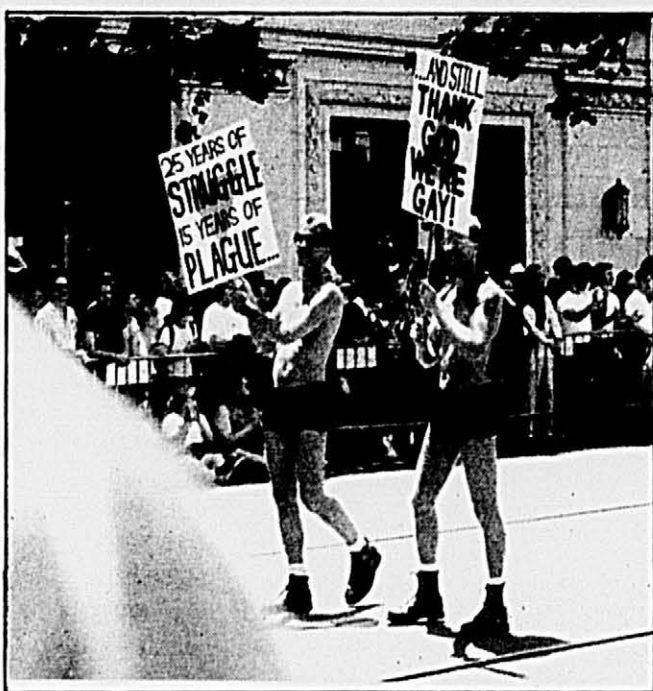
été alléché par l'odeur des promesses du gouvernement du Canada et que le gouvernement du Québec a déjà fait de gros efforts, on n'est pas encore passé à table », poursuit M. Hendricks. En effet, Jean Chrétien avait promis un amendement à la Charte des Droits et des Libertés de 1982 afin d'interdire la discrimination sur les bases de l'orientation sexuelle. Cela ne reste pour l'instant qu'une promesse. Le Gouvernement du Québec a quant à lui déjà incliné cette motion dans sa Charte et ce depuis une vingtaine d'années déjà.

La position non-partisane qu'a adoptée la Table de concertation n'est cependant pas synonyme de non participation au vote. En effet, M.

Hendricks souligne que « la participation aux urnes est importante. Avec 10 p. cent des votes, on peut changer l'issue du vote. Nous avons donc fait des recommandations à nos membres pour qu'ils aillent voter. »

Au delà de la position officielle, M. Hendricks a ses propres convictions personnelles. « Le projet de société proposé par le Parti québécois semble plus intéressant pour nous que l'alternative canadienne. Il n'y a aucune arrière garde droitiste dans le gouvernement du Québec alors que dans le reste du Canada, les positions sont plus radicales à notre égard », souligne M. Hendricks.

En ce qui concerne l'interdiction de la discrimination sur la base de l'orientation sexuelle, les réactions de la droite anglophone à la Chambre des Communes, lors de ce débat, reflète bien le malaise que peuvent provoquer les revendications de la communauté homosexuelle. « Le parti du NON est moins prêt à se prononcer sur notre avenir et même à aborder la question car il porte le fardeau des provinces plus conservatrices », ajoute M. Hendricks. « Si le OUI passe, je suis plus sûr de notre avenir alors qu'avec le Canada, ce n'est pas encore gagné... » conclut-il.



Référendum au Nunavik

NOUVELLE
Jean-François Corbett

Les Inuit du Nunavik (ou Nouveau-Québec) tiendront leur propre référendum sur l'avenir du Québec, le jeudi 26 octobre prochain. Quatre jours avant le référendum pan-québécois, les Inuit répondront à la question suivante : « Etes-vous d'accord pour que le Québec devienne souverain ? »

Les Inuit désirent poser un geste qui fera impact sur les médias, selon Stephen Hendrie, directeur de l'information de la Société Makivik, important organisme inuit. « Nous voulons que les Québécois et les Canadiens réalisent que le peuple Inuit veut prendre ses propres décisions en ce qui concerne son territoire. Les Inuit refusent de se faire balancer de juridiction en juridiction sans qu'on leur demande leur avis, comme c'était le cas dans le passé », explique M. Hendrie.

En effet, les Inuit n'ont jamais été consultés quant à la division géopolitique du territoire canadien. L'Acte de l'Amérique du Nord britannique de 1867 et l'Acte d'extension des frontières de 1912, qui a conféré au Québec le territoire de l'Ungava, ont tous deux suscité un grand mécontentement chez la population inuit. « Les frontières actuelles sont anciennes d'au plus 400 ans, mais les Inuit vivent ici depuis plus de 30 000 ans. Ces lignes sur la carte n'ont aucune signification pour les Inuit. Elles ont été imposées par des étrangers », affirme M. Hendrie.

Dans cette optique, les Inuit avaient aussi tenu un référendum en 1980, à l'époque de la première consultation populaire sur l'indépendance du Québec. Lors de ce référendum, les Inuit avaient, dans une proportion de 94,4 p. cent, confié à une Association inuit le mandat de négocier leur statut géopolitique, advenant un OUI à la souveraineté du Québec. Par contre, quelques jours plus tard, 83 % de la population Inuit avait voté NON au référendum québécois.

Malgré cette tendance historique contre la souveraineté, « les Inuit ne sont pas des bénévoles pour le Comité du NON et n'entretiennent aucune inimitié envers le Québec », rappelle Zebede Nungak, président de la Société Makivik.

Quel sera l'impact d'un OUI (au référendum pan-québécois) sur la population Inuit et sa situation politique ? « Nous aborderons cette question en temps et lieux, si le OUI passe », déclare M. Nungak.

Mintzberg: un pur coton!

LITTÉRATURE
Bianca Robichaud

Un « pur coton » de l'Université McGill a publié dernièrement un essai sur la problématique canadienne. Henry Mintzberg, professeur à la faculté de management, a réussi un tour de force en analysant de façon humoristique les enjeux d'un Québec souverain.

Henry Mintzberg se définit comme un « pur coton », sa langue et son origine ethnique lui conférant un autre statut que celui de « pur laine » qui désigne les francophones. Un « pur coton » c'est à la fois un non-francophone de souche et un non-autochtone; c'est le reste !

Son livre intitulé *Les propos d'un pur coton*, fait l'éloge du Canada d'aujourd'hui et anticipe de façon négative les conséquences d'un OUI au référendum. Contrairement à bien d'autres livres parus sur le marché, ce dernier se veut être un message du cœur et non pas une « analyse scientifique » de la situation canadienne et référendaire. Son amour du Québec et de Montréal, est reflété tout au long de ce court essai et réussit d'ailleurs à passer à travers les réticences des souverainistes les plus invétérés.

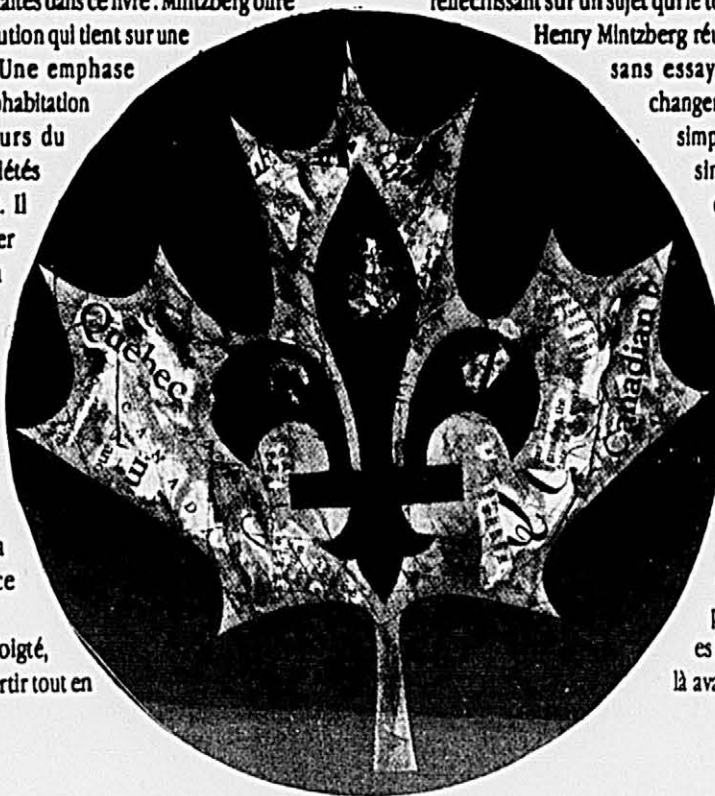
Plusieurs suggestions sont faites dans ce livre. Mintzberg offre d'ailleurs une nouvelle constitution qui tient sur une simple feuille de papier. Une emphase particulière est mise sur la cohabitation des trois peuples fondateurs du Canada et une idée de trois sociétés distinctes est mise de l'avant. Il envisage donc, pour restructurer de façon plus équitable la constitution, un rassemblement des « purs laines », des « purs cotons » ainsi que des autochtones identifiés comme les « purs poils ». L'auteur qui se décrit comme « un gars ben ordinaire », dit offrir avec toute modestie sa contribution personnelle à ce débat canadien.

Cet essai, construit avec doigté, permet au lecteur de se divertir tout en

réfléchissant sur un sujet qui le touche tout particulièrement.

Henry Mintzberg réussit à intéresser son public sans essayer toutefois de lui faire changer d'opinion. Le message est simple et l'approche subtile et sincère (ce qui semble rare ces jours-ci) est susceptible de rejoindre les lecteurs et lectrices des deux clans. C'est le ton qu'il donne à son essai qui le rend si différent.

Il était donc une fois, l'histoire d'un « pur coton » qui un jour voulait reconstruire son pays avec ses amis les « purs laines » qui parlaient français et ses amis les « purs poils » qui étaient là avant tout le monde.



L'évolution du nationalisme québécois

HISTORIQUE
Michel Tremblay

Le débat sur la Constitution canadienne n'est pas né d'hier. Il s'ouvre à partir de la fin de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale et prend de l'ampleur dans les années 1960 et 1970.

L'arrivée au pouvoir des libéraux de Jean Lesage en 1960 marque le début de la Révolution tranquille. Cette période se caractérise par des réformes politiques, institutionnelles et sociales qui ont remodelé le Québec.

Celui-ci, a-t-on dit depuis, devient alors une société nouvelle. Le mot d'ordre devient « maître chez nous ». On accélère le processus de modernisation de l'après-guerre qui fut un temps freiné par le gouvernement de Maurice Duplessis. L'État nationalise plusieurs institutions comme les collèges et universités de même que les hôpitaux, jusqu'alors dirigés par les ordres religieux, afin d'en démocratiser l'accès. Par ailleurs, tout l'appareil gouvernemental est transformé alors que des ministères, tels que celui de l'éducation créé en 1964, des régies et des sociétés d'État sont mis sur pied.

Qui plus est, la Révolution tranquille entraîne un nouveau nationalisme qui se manifeste sur trois fronts. Au Québec, on remet en cause l'emprise de la minorité anglophone sur l'économie. Au Canada, on veut mettre fin à la centralisation accrue du gouvernement fédéral et obtenir plus de pouvoirs pour le Québec. Dans le monde, on affirme une présence québécoise internationale en établissant des liens étroits avec la France et plusieurs autres pays de la francophonie.

Cette période voit naître des partis politiques indépendantistes tels que le Rassemblement pour l'indépendance nationale (RIN) et le Parti québécois (PQ) fondé par René Lévesque. Par ailleurs, un groupe terroriste, le Front de libération du Québec (FLQ), fait son apparition en 1963.

Ce dernier s'en prend aux institutions fédérales comme l'armée et les bureaux de poste qui sont, selon les « felquistes », des symboles de colonialisme. Les membres du FLQ participent également aux luttes sociales et conflits ouvriers, tout en préconisant l'indépendance du Québec et l'accès des francophones aux postes de commande de l'économie et de la société.

Les actes terroristes du FLQ culminent en 1970 lors de la crise d'octobre. Les terroristes enlèvent le diplomate britannique James Richard Cross et le ministre Pierre Laporte. Ces actions provoquent une fulgurante riposte de la part du gouvernement fédéral qui déclare la loi des mesures de guerre et envoie l'armée dans les rues de Montréal. Lors des événements, le ministre Laporte est assassiné.

Au cours des années 1970, la bataille linguistique qui s'est amorcée à la fin de la décennie précédente, se poursuit.

En 1976, le Parti québécois est élu. Ce nouveau gouvernement adopte la loi 101 qui stipule que le français est la seule langue officielle du Québec et organise, en mai 1980, un référendum sur la souveraineté du Québec. L'option des péquistes est battue, n'obtenant que 40,4 p. cent pour le Oui, contre 59,6 p. cent pour le Non.

En 1982, alors que le Québec réclame des pouvoirs accrus ainsi qu'un statut spécial, les autres provinces et le gouvernement fédéral de Pierre Elliott Trudeau n'acceptent pas ces demandes. Ils adoptent la nouvelle loi constitutionnelle, sans le consentement du Québec qui y est exclu. C'est ce qu'on appelle le rapatriement unilatéral de la Constitution canadienne.

Dans la seconde moitié des années 1980, les gouvernements québécois et fédéral tentent à deux reprises de relancer les négociations afin que le Québec reconnaisse officiellement la Constitution de 1982. Tout d'abord, ils proposent l'accord du Lac Meech qui constitue un compromis politique permettant au Québec d'adhérer à la loi de 1982. L'entente est ratifiée par toutes les provinces en 1987, mais elle devient caduque en 1990 alors que le Manitoba et Terre-Neuve font volte-face en refusant de l'entériner. On propose ensuite l'Accord de Charlottetown en 1992. La population canadienne est soumise à un référendum afin de faire approuver cette entente. Cependant, la majorité des électeurs, tant ceux du Québec que ceux du Canada, s'y opposent. Le Non l'emporte avec 54,2 p. cent des voix contre 44,8 p. cent pour le Oui.

Finalement, en 1994, Jacques Parizeau est élu premier ministre du Québec et propose un second référendum sur la souveraineté du Québec. Il reste à voir si l'option des péquistes sera acceptée par les électeurs.

SOURCES: LINTEAU, Paul-André et al., Histoire du Québec contemporain. Le Québec depuis 1930, Montréal, Boréal, 1989. 834 p.; COOK, Ramsay, Le Canada. Etude moderne, Montréal, Guérin, 1988. 309 p.; L'État du monde. Édition 1993; RUSSELL, Peter H., Constitutional Odyssey, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1993. 317 p.

Le 23 octobre 1995

Un OUI conscient, un

Le peuple québécois se retrouve encore une fois à la croisée des chemins. L'équipe de ce journal dans sa majorité a choisi de soutenir la cause souverainiste entre autre pour les raisons exposées dans cet éditorial. Nous envisageons la souveraineté comme une première étape, comme un outil et non une fin en soi, comme un nouvel espace politique qui s'ouvre à nous les jeunes des années 1990.

La souveraineté est un but tout à fait désirable. Effectivement, si l'on entend par là la souveraineté du peuple — celle du plus grand nombre, ce qui signifie que celui-ci a le pouvoir de déterminer comment il va satisfaire ses aspirations. Cependant, s'il était clair que le vote qu'on nous demande portait sur cela, la majorité n'aurait pas trop de mal à se décider.

Il ne faut donc pas se faire d'illusion. Nous ne sommes pas invités à la grande messe référendaire pour déterminer si notre société sera souveraine ou non. Peut-être aurons-nous, le 31 octobre, la souveraineté de l'État québécois, ce qui par ailleurs devient une idée de plus en plus vide de sens, à mesure que les États cèdent de leur souveraineté aux milieux financiers.

Le mythe du projet de société

Ce qu'on nous propose en ce moment, c'est une « souveraineté étatique », par opposition à une « société souveraine », selon les termes de Daniel Lagacé, directeur de *Virtualité*. Certains diront alors qu'il ne s'agit que d'un changement de drapeau et qu'il ne sert à rien. Mais au delà de cette simple constatation, il y a-t-il dans tout ceci une raison suffisante pour refuser l'indépendance ?

Non ! Car, il serait illusoire de vouloir atteindre la société idéale avant de se lancer. Au contraire, la souveraineté restera à faire et si on se lance, on se lance en fait dans la construction de cette souveraineté. C'est ce qui rend la tâche d'autant plus attrayante.

Et il est illusoire d'attendre de l'État ce que nous devons nous-mêmes construire en tant qu'individus : un projet de société, un nouveau du contrat social. On ne peut déléguer toutes nos responsabilités à l'État. C'est-à-dire qu'il n'y a que nous, citoyens et citoyennes, qui pouvons construire ce projet. Et ceci ne peut se faire qu'au moyen d'une plus grande participation et d'un plus grand engagement personnel. Dans cette perspective, dire oui, c'est faire appel à la responsabilité de chacun-e.

Pour tous ceux et celles qui, comme l'équipe de ce journal, cherchent un autre sens à la vie et un renouvellement du contrat social, le défi actuel face à la montée des extrêmes et de la droite est énorme. Et dans cette logique de changement social, la souveraineté ne doit pas être perçue comme une fin en soi, mais bien comme un moment catalyseur selon l'expression consacrée par M. Lagacé, comme l'ouverture d'un nouvel espace politique dont les mouvements sociaux, la société civile en général, doit être la première à s'emparer.

Le panorama politique

De façon à bien saisir cette perspective sur la question il faut regarder le panorama politique actuel. Au fédéral et au provincial, la tendance se confirme depuis les années 1980 : réduction de l'intervention de l'État, privatisations, réductions des programmes sociaux, déréglementation du marché du travail, etc. Cette tendance, que l'on appelle néo-libérale, sous-tend que la fonction de l'État n'est pas de rééquilibrer les rapports sociaux.

« Dans l'actuel contexte idéologique, aucune structure politique n'est garante du mieux-être pour la majorité » écrit Viviane Portebois membre de l'équipe de *Virtualité*. Autrement dit, dans le contexte politique actuel nos idéaux égalitaires seront constamment remis en question ou tout simplement mis de côté.

Et c'est bien pour cela que le tant attendu projet de société, qui serait garant d'objectifs communs pour le bien-être général, ne tombera pas du ciel. Par ailleurs, il ne viendra sûrement pas du camp fédéral. Celui-ci n'a rien à proposer de nouveau, si l'on se fie aux arguments de la campagne référendaire... c'est-à-dire, pourtant, le seul argument en faveur d'un vote négatif.

Mais imaginons un instant que ceci importe peu, oublions un moment que les fédéralistes n'ont même pas senti la nécessité de renouveler radicalement la fédération, et qu'ainsi la question reste valide : en quoi un oui le 30 octobre prochain représente-t-il un enjeu primordial pour l'avenir du Québec ?

Face au désintérêt généralisé de la population pour ses propres institutions (l'État, l'éducation, etc.) il apparaît nécessaire et urgent de leur redonner une signification, un sens. Dans cette perspective, la souveraineté

À l'occasion de ce numéro spécial s Premières Nations, l'équipe du McGill D en faveur de la souveraineté du Qué que l'opinion d'une partie (majoritaire c'est NON » représente la position de

pourrait bien impliquer un certain renouveau institutionnel qui permettrait aux gens de se reconnaître dans les institutions québécoises.

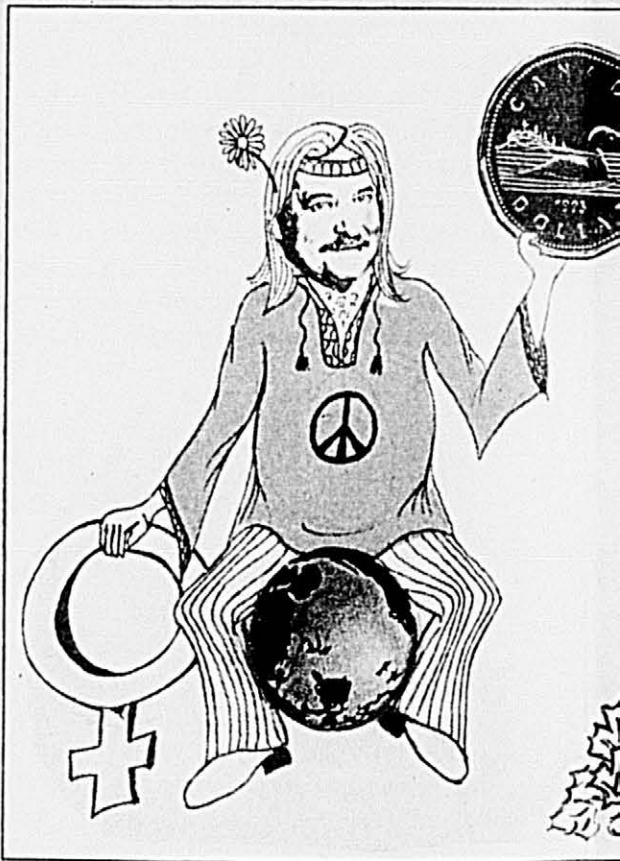
De plus, d'une façon ou d'une autre, la division de l'électorat sur des lignes sociales est bien plus nette qu'en 1980 : d'un côté, le Conseil du patronat (lui, il sait ce qui est bon pour nous...), les banques, les groupes financiers et les grands entrepreneurs; de l'autre, les syndicats, le mouvement coopératif, les groupes populaires, les organismes communautaires et une partie importante des artistes et intellectuels.

Définitivement, les parti pris sont clairs. Et c'est pour cette simple raison que le débat, qu'on le veuille ou non, se situe aussi dans une perspective de progrès social et politique. C'est un enjeu primordial. L'équipe de ce journal a choisi son côté.

Penser l'avenir

Même si les positions exprimées plus haut sont plus que suffisantes pour déterminer notre vote, deux autres thèmes névralgiques ne peuvent être laissés de côté. Il y a l'identité québécoise, et la situation constitutionnelle canadienne. Celle-ci comprend : le blocage constitutionnel, la non-existence d'une communauté politique pan-canadienne et la troublante tendance à droite du climat politique canadien (déjà aperçu plus haut).

En ce qui concerne l'identité, il semble assez évident que l'on ne se sépare pas simplement parce qu'on est « différent », contrairement à ce qu'on peut fréquemment entendre. Même si linguistiquement parlant on peut voir des différences fondamentales. La langue reste un des moteurs de la cause



souverainiste. Ainsi, de façon générale, les anglo-saxons ont une perception plus instrumentale de leur langue, alors que la francophonie y voit plus « une façon d'être », comme le dit le professeur Charles Taylor.

Dans tous les cas, ce qui rend la séparation acceptable c'est, premièrement, que le Canada a donné et donnera une fin de non-recevoir à la demande de reconnaissance de cette différence.

Deuxièmement, du côté politique, le Canada et le Québec, de façon générale, envisagent et conçoivent leur avenir de façons différentes. Les dernières consultations populaires ont clairement fait apparaître que la population québécoise continue d'envisager la social-démocratie comme un avenir politique viable. Par contre, du côté canadien la tendance générale montre que le système politico-économique est perçu différemment. « La

Un OUI sans hésitations

Sur l'avenir du Québec, du Canada et des francophones, le McGill Daily français a choisi de prendre position. Ce texte ne représente cependant pas l'avis de l'équipe. Le texte « C'est simple, c'est NON » est signé par ses signataires uniquement.

«différence» est réelle mais elle tient bien moins à une sorte de caractère collectif qu'à une idée distincte de ce qu'est le futur, et de la façon de s'y gouverner pour y arriver » écrit Lise Bissonnette, directrice de *Le Devoir*.

Une des questions fondamentales est donc, « comment envisage-t-on l'avenir ? »

Trois éléments généraux doivent être alors abordés : le social, le politique et l'économique. Au cours de la minable campagne à laquelle nous assistons, l'économique a été omniprésent. Il semble que les fédéralistes, à court d'arguments sur les deux premiers points, ne se soient concentrés que sur le dernier. C'est bien malheureux que l'autre camp ait mordu à l'hameçon. De plus, bien que cela soit discutable, d'aucuns diront que le bien-être économique n'est que le résultat du bon fonctionnement social et politique et non pas l'inverse.

Le social

Il ne s'agit pas ici de faire une analyse détaillée des trois composantes, mais quelques points peuvent être avancés. Par exemple, pour beaucoup c'est le système de sécurité sociale canadien qui représente en fait le seul lien, la seule solidarité collective, qui unit et qui donne sa raison d'être à la fédération canadienne. D'ailleurs, lorsqu'on parle d'insécurité face à la souveraineté souvent on ne fait que référence à la possible perte des acquis sociaux du système canadien. Mais il y a lieu, aujourd'hui, de se demander en quoi ce lien est significatif si tous les gouvernements (fédéraux et provinciaux) ne font que remettre en question cette sécurité sociale.



Le constitutionnel

Puis, au delà des similitudes évidentes que l'on retrouve au Canada d'Est en Ouest, il y a une différence philosophique fondamentale entre anglo-saxons et francophones.

Le Canada, à l'image des États-Unis, a adopté une vision procédurale de la démocratie libérale : on met l'accent sur les droits individuels. Le Québec, de son côté, poursuit la reconnaissance de droits collectifs, ce qui à l'évidence va à l'encontre de la conception canadienne du droit — qui ne reconnaît que l'individu. Le problème apparaît à partir du moment où la conception du droit canadien devient le seul terrain d'entente possible et acceptable. C'est-à-dire, qu'à partir du moment où les réclamations québécoises sont incompatibles avec la démocratie libérale, ce système est intenable pour le Québec.

En 1992, après Meech, le professeur Taylor disait « notre seule façon de coexister est d'accepter d'être en désaccord (...) Cela signifie-t-il que nous pourrions coexister uniquement sous la forme de deux sociétés indépendantes? Voilà la thèse des souverainistes du Québec. Cette thèse s'impose uniquement dans la mesure où les libéraux procéduraux ne démentent pas du principe qu'ils ne peuvent accepter de partager le pays avec des gens qui vivent selon un autre modèle. »

En d'autres termes, comme l'avait dit Pascal au 17^e siècle, « la source de toute hérésie, est de ne pas concevoir l'accord de deux vérités opposées et de croire qu'elles sont incompatibles. »

On peut donc concevoir deux solutions. Soit on croit que les *canadiens* sauront un jour, dans leur majorité, reconnaître ce fait et on croit, en plus, que le fédéralisme canadien saura montrer assez de souplesse pour incorporer le changement. Auquel cas on vote non.

Soit on croit, comme la majorité des québécois, que les *canadiens* ne sont pas prêts d'accepter cette différence de principes. Dans cette perspective, on peut aussi croire que l'ensemble canadien sera bien plus souple lorsque tout le monde aura rapatrié ses pouvoirs décisionnels et que tous n'auront plus qu'eux-même à blâmer lorsque surgira un inconvénient quelconque.

Et dans ce dernier cas, on peut espérer que de leur côté les *canadiens* sauront résoudre leur sentiment d'insécurité identitaire, comme le souligne M. Taylor, par rapport aux États-Unis (dont ils partagent la langue et la culture de masse). Puis on peut aussi espérer que du côté québécois on saura aussi résoudre ce même type de sentiment qui a mené aux manifestations les plus déplorables du nationalisme québécois. Dans ce dernier cas on vote oui.

L'économique

Le sujet économique ne vaut pas la peine d'être débattu ici. Il a déjà assez large presse ailleurs. Cependant, lorsqu'on nous dit que la tendance mondiale est à l'union, aux regroupements de grands ensembles, à la chute des barrières et à l'ouverture des marchés, il manque un élément essentiel à l'argument. La tendance est plutôt à l'union d'États souverains, libres de leur choix et seuls responsables de leurs acquis ou de leurs erreurs. Une nuance bien trop importante.

Par ailleurs, on peut se demander en quoi notre appartenance au Canada nous permet une plus grande ouverture vers le monde (un argument assez en vogue dernièrement). Comme le fait remarquer le sociologue Fernand Dumont, « si on en reste à ce niveau de débat, pourquoi ne pas passer carrément à l'annexion aux États-Unis ? Ce serait « plus vaste » encore ! »

Les autochtones

Un autre problème se pose avec acuité : la situation des anglophones, des allophones et surtout des autochtones au sein du Québec, indépendant ou non.

Sans pour autant renier ses positions souverainistes, on peut se permettre d'espérer que la plus grande difficulté que rencontrera le Québec sur sa route vers la reconnaissance internationale sera celle du statut qu'il accordera à sa population amérindienne. L'ONU a été catégorique là dessus, et Parizeau se l'est déjà fait répéter plusieurs fois : il n'est pas question d'oublier les demandes faites par les nations amérindiennes si le Québec veut être reconnu.

Notre oui

Notre oui n'est donc ni un oui « inconscient », ni « irresponsable », ni « suicidaire ». Bien au contraire, c'est un oui connaissant, conscient des défis qui se posent au Québec. C'est un oui, qui ne se cache rien.

C'est un oui qui se rappelle qu'il y a des autochtones au Québec, qu'il y a des anglophones et d'autres communautés culturelles qui font partie du Québec. C'est un oui qui se foute des « cennes » gagnées ou perdues. C'est un oui qui n'oublie pas que plus de 20 p. cent de la population québécoise vit sous le seuil de la pauvreté.

C'est un oui qui rappelle à notre gérance que ce sont les jeunes qui voteront le 30 octobre 1995 qui seront les premiers à construire la souveraineté du Québec. C'est un oui qui va au delà des petits intérêts mesquins. C'est un oui qui veut un pays où il n'y aura pas besoin d'une loi 101, ni d'« entente », ni de « concessions » pour vivre sa langue.

Pour tous ce qui a été exposé plus haut et bien bien plus, c'est un oui sans hésitation.

Atim Léon pour l'équipe du McGill Daily français.

C'est simple, c'est NON

OPINION

Emmanuelle Latraverse, Tristan E. Landry

Voter NON au prochain référendum, ce n'est pas nécessairement manquer de nationalisme, être peureux ou faire preuve d'un amour immodéré pour ce cher fédéralisme canadien. C'est tout simplement tenir compte de plusieurs réalités sociales, économiques que l'option souverainiste, plutôt idéaliste, a tendance à oublier.

L'avenir du Canada et du Québec se décidera dans moins d'une semaine, et ce n'est pas faire « une campagne de peur » que d'affirmer que les enjeux pour le Québec sont énormes. Malheureusement, le niveau du discours de la campagne est si superficiel et si émotif que le débat de fond, celui sur lequel chacun et chacune doit fonder sa décision, est tout simplement absent.

Depuis les quarante dernières années, la position du Québec a énormément changé au sein du Canada. Les francophones sont reconnus. Ils et elles peuvent crier haut et fort « nous sommes maîtres chez nous », comme le réclamait Jean Lesage. Grâce à la loi 101, la langue française n'est plus vraiment menacée au Québec. Notre province demeure en outre une force centrale de la fédération canadienne.

Il est d'ailleurs faux de prétendre que le Canada néglige de s'adapter au caractère distinct du Québec. Le Québec, sous le gouvernement de Paul Sauvé, a été la première province à avoir pleine juridiction en matière d'éducation pré-universitaire. Le Québec n'est-il pas la seule province canadienne à avoir une juridiction en matière d'immigration, à percevoir son propre impôt sur le revenu ?

La fédération canadienne n'est pas parfaite. Elle doit continuer à évoluer tout comme elle l'a fait depuis les quelques deux cent dernières années. Voter NON, c'est croire en cette évolution et reconnaître ses mérites.

Il est vrai que, advenant un OUI, un million d'emplois ne seront pas perdus et que le Québec ne risque pas de devenir une « république de bananes » ou le 53^e état américain. Ce n'est toutefois pas suffisant pour conclure que le Québec n'a rien à perdre. Au contraire, le Québec fait partie d'un grand pays, le Canada, respecté sur la scène politique et économique internationale. Le Canada est membre du G-7, de l'ALÉNA, de l'Organisation mondiale du commerce et le Québec, en tant que province, profite de cette position d'avant plan. Un Québec souverain serait privé de ces acquis et perdrait le statut respecté du Canada dans ses négociations internationales. C'est une réalité inévitable de la politique mondiale.

En réalisant le projet de souveraineté proposé par la coalition PQ-Bloc-ADQ, le Québec perdrait ces avantages qui lui sont garantis par la fédération et devrait rebâtir cette place de choix, tant sur le plan nord-américain qu'international. D'ailleurs le secrétaire d'État américain Warren Christopher déclarait la semaine dernière qu'un Québec souverain ne bénéficierait pas de ses privilèges de province canadienne, et que ses relations avec les États-Unis, un de ses principaux partenaires commerciaux, seraient à redéfinir.

L'option souverainiste tient pour certaine une coopération du Canada en cas de séparation. Le Canada aura intérêt avant tout à réorganiser un pays déchiré avant d'accommoder les requêtes d'un Québec souverain. Compte tenu de la complexité des relations entre États indépendants, le meilleur levier que les québécois et québécoises peuvent avoir pour négocier avec le reste du Canada n'est-il pas à l'intérieur même de la fédération ?

Une crise économique sévit, ronge les emplois et amplifie une dette déjà importante. Le momentum n'existe pas pour prendre ces risques, au lieu de travailler à remédier aux problèmes sociaux et économiques éminents qui affligent notre société. Plutôt, pourquoi ne pas mettre nos efforts à améliorer un pays certes imparfait comme tous les autres, mais néanmoins plein d'avenir, de ressources humaines et matérielles ? Le Québec fait partie de ce pays, et ce, depuis son origine. Il a apporté une contribution majeure à son édification et à son identité.

Voter NON ne signifie pas rejeter son identité québécoise, au profit d'une identité exclusivement canadienne. Voter NON c'est reconnaître qu'historiquement, cette identité québécoise n'a pu être construite qu'au sein même du Canada.

Le 23 octobre 1995

Vision canadienne du référendum québécois

NOUVELLE
Tristan-E. Landry

A lors que le peuple québécois anticipe avec patience le jour du scrutin, le reste du Canada reste tranquillement dans l'ombre en attendant le verdict.

Toutefois, cette attente permet aux étudiant-es du Canada de développer leurs opinions particulières et régionalisées sur les enjeux du prochain référendum.

Dans les provinces atlantiques, le ton envers le Québec est généralement froid. Les provinces maritimes ont toujours été une région fortement dépendante du gouvernement fédéral, donc éminemment fédéraliste. Les enjeux de ce référendum sont importants pour cette région. Advenant la souveraineté du Québec, l'Atlantique sera littéralement coupé du reste du Canada.

Le fait de se retrouver écarté du reste du Canada semble d'ailleurs inquiéter nombre d'universitaires de la région. « La souveraineté québécoise risque de mettre sérieusement en péril le développement économique de la région. Le Nouveau-Brunswick commence à peine à développer son potentiel économique, il n'a vraiment pas besoin d'un autre coup dur qui pourrait mettre en péril son boom économique », soutient Kate Adams, étudiante en droit à l'Université de Moncton.

nouvelle du *Muse*, le journal étudiant de l'Université Memorial, croit que les gens de Terre-Neuve sont plutôt antipathiques face au débat référendaire. « Depuis la question du Labrador, les Terre-Neuviens n'ont pas vraiment le Québec dans le cœur. Le présent référendum et les positions soutenues par les souverainistes ne font qu'augmenter les tensions entre le Canada et le Québec », admet M. Cochrane.

Ce dernier estime aussi que les gens de Terre-Neuve ne veulent pas d'entente entre un Québec souverain et le reste du Canada. « Si le Québec se sépare, il se sépare. Pas question d'avoir une monnaie commune et pas question de signer des ententes avantageuses, le Québec devra se débrouiller seul », conclut M. Cochrane.

Au Canada central, la position des gens semble être un peu plus modérée. L'Ontario, grandement lié au Québec du point de vue économique, tient un discours plutôt sobre face à la question référendaire.

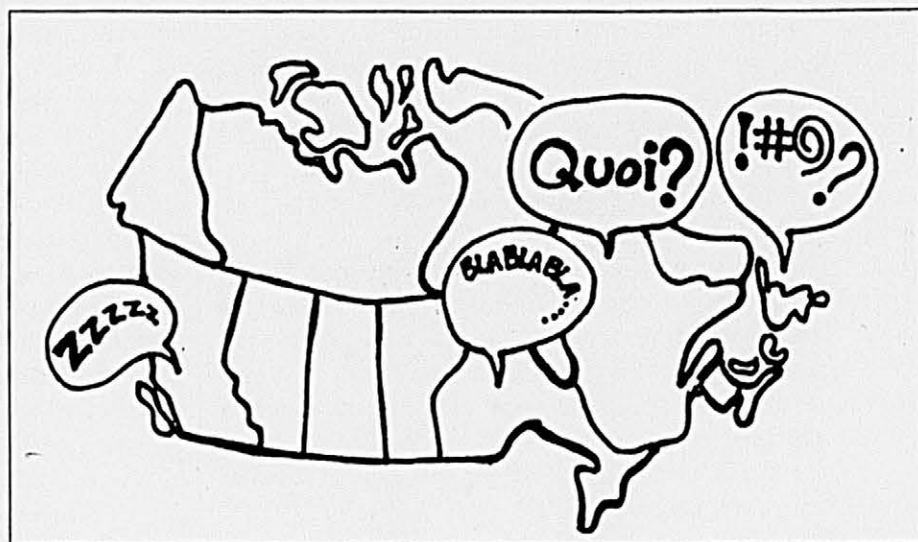
À l'Université d'Ottawa, les positions souverainistes sont d'ailleurs bien reçues auprès de la population étudiante francophone. « Les francophones à l'université sont plutôt favorables au camp du OUI. Avec le virage à droite que nous connaissons en Ontario, les gens voient dans le projet de souveraineté une possibilité d'éviter les coupures injustes », avance Martin Dupuis, l'un des rédacteurs de *la Rotonde*, le journal étudiant francophone de l'Université d'Ottawa. Toutefois, comme le fait remarquer M. Dupuis, la population francophone à l'Université d'Ottawa est fortement québécoise, expliquant en partie leur tendance pro-souverainiste.

« Les anglophones, de leur côté, ne sont pas vraiment favorables à la souveraineté. Ils ont la sensation qu'on est en train de détruire leur pays », admet M. Dupuis. Selon le journaliste de *la Rotonde*, cette situation s'explique par le manque d'information qu'ont les anglophones sur les enjeux véritables de la souveraineté. « Les médias canadiens ne rapportent

que le côté du gouvernement fédéral et ils déforment le message souverainiste », rajoute M. Dupuis.

David Cashback, un étudiant en sciences politiques à l'Université d'Ottawa, ne croit pas de son côté que le Québec ait besoin de se séparer pour obtenir ce qu'il cherche. « Si on remet toute

cette histoire référendaire en perspective, la population du Québec est relativement homogène et elle profite d'avantages que d'autres provinces n'ont pas. La fédération canadienne, dans le cas du Québec, a démontré sa flexibilité à plusieurs reprises », soutient M. Cashback.



Dans l'ouest canadien, la question référendaire ne semble pas être un enjeu de grande importance.

« Le Québec, c'est loin de nous autres. Un Québec souverain ou un Québec à l'intérieur de la fédération canadienne, on ne voit pas vraiment la différence d'ici. Ce que nous voulons, c'est en finir essentiellement avec la question, une fois pour toutes », soutient Anna Brooks, une étudiante en communication à l'Université de Victoria. Elle admet qu'en général les gens de la Colombie-Britannique ne comprennent pas les véritables motifs du présent débat. « Peu de gens en Colombie-Britannique ont mis les pieds au Québec. La défense du français et la défense de la culture française, ce sont des concepts inconnus ici », rajoute Mme Brooks.

L'étudiante de l'Université de Victoria estime cependant que l'incompréhension des réalités entre les peuples fondateurs du Canada est l'une des causes principales du marasme constitutionnel. « Si les gens d'ici ne comprennent pas vraiment les gens du Québec, ces derniers ne sont pas plus au courant de ce qui se passe en Colombie-Britannique », conclut Mme Brooks.

L'anthropologie à la rescousse du OUI

LITTÉRATURE
Marie-Andrée Vermette

A force de baigner dans la campagne référendaire et d'avoir les yeux rivés sur ce fatidique 30 octobre, le peuple québécois, obnubilé par sa propre condition, oublie les souches mêmes de ce mouvement nationaliste. Dans son livre *Le Syndrome des Plaines d'Abraham*, l'anthropologue Eric Schwimmer, analyse le phénomène du nationalisme et tente de le relier à la question québécoise.

Il dresse un portrait des luttes que certains peuples ont menées pour accéder à l'indépendance et utilise ces exemples pour expliquer les deux bases fondamentales à l'émergence de mouvements nationalistes : la « minorisation » et les cycles de tolérance. À la lumière des ces expériences et d'entrevues réalisées en Mauricie, l'auteur examine ensuite la situation du Québec. Il affirme que, dans un État pluraliste où les valeurs de base sont établies par un noyau culturel prépondérant, les valeurs des autres sont tolérées mais minoritaires.

Après cette analyse des points communs à toute lutte indépendantiste, M. Schwimmer tourne son regard vers le référendum québécois. Il avance l'hypothèse que le Canada anglais considère les Québécois et Québécoises comme une minorité : depuis la bataille des plaines d'Abraham, anglophones et francophones n'ont jamais fait la paix.

Il lui semble inutile d'entamer d'autres négociations entre le Québec et le reste du Canada. D'une part, le Canada serait probablement réticent à négocier une entente

qui n'aurait pour effet que de compliquer sa structure politique. D'autre part, le Québec n'a rien à lui offrir en échange : il « semble charger le Canada de toutes les responsabilités sérieuses, en lui faisant jouer une fois de plus son rôle de Père : celui de gâter les enfants, pour assurer la tranquillité de la maison. »

D'après l'auteur, les pays qui ont accédé à la souveraineté ont pris cette décision lorsque les coûts du nationalisme sont devenus trop élevés et quand les bénéfices retirés ont été jugés insatisfaisants. Malheureusement, la rupture totale ne faisant pas partie des habitudes de la culture traditionnelle québécoise, l'intrinsèque pulsion souverainiste se voit freinée au Québec. Il lance toutefois ce message d'espoir aux troupes souverainistes : le référendum de 1995 n'est pas celui de la dernière chance. La progression de l'idée souverainiste se poursuivra, lentement mais sûrement.

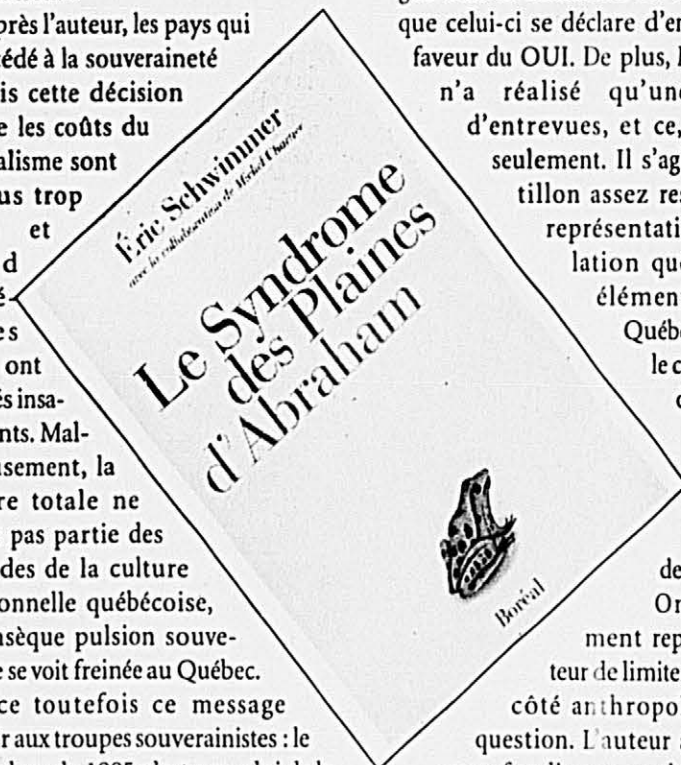
L'auteur met beaucoup d'énergie à étudier les succès et les échecs des mouvements indépendantistes étrangers sous prétexte de comparer ces mouvements à celui du Québec. Cette première partie permettrait de se familiariser avec certains concepts impor-

tants si l'application de ces concepts à la situation québécoise ne devenait vague et peu explicite. Les deux parties du livre n'ont alors que peu de liens l'une avec l'autre.

De plus, la partie du livre portant sur le Québec est déficiente à plusieurs égards. Tout d'abord l'objectivité de l'anthropologue dans sa démarche est discutable puisque celui-ci se déclare d'entrée de jeu en faveur du OUI. De plus, M. Schwimmer n'a réalisé qu'une quinzaine d'entrevues, et ce, en Mauricie seulement. Il s'agit d'un échantillon assez restreint et peu représentatif de la population québécoise. Des éléments propres au Québec, tels les villes, le cosmopolitisme de Montréal, et d'autres régions, sont complètement exclus de sa démarche.

On peut également reprocher à l'auteur de limiter son analyse au côté anthropologique de la question. L'auteur aurait gagné à approfondir son analyse en puisant aussi du côté économique, politique, sociale. Peut-être aurait-il alors réussi à faire oublier à son lectorat ses préjugés, pour ôser se questionner sur le fond de la question.

Le Syndrome des Plaines d'Abraham de Eric Schwimmer avec la collaboration de Michel Chartier aux Éditions du Boréal, 210 pages, 24,95\$.



La bataille des publicités :

C'est quoi ton signe?

COMMENTAIRE
Marc Antoine Godin

Les publicités en vue du choix référendaire battent leur plein. Partout on rivalise de couleurs, on joue à qui a la plus grosse... un jeu d'enfants. Des milliers de dollars sont dépensés en pancartes, en auto-collants, en publi-reportages, pour n'arriver qu'à un seul but : vous convaincre de mettre votre X à la bonne place.

D'abord il est assez fascinant de constater dans quels secteurs de Montréal chaque camp s'affiche. De manière générale, les organisations politiques inno-
dent de leurs cartons les quartiers déjà gagnés à leur

option. La forteresse de Mercier, comté du bas du Plateau Mont-Royal, est un bastion souverainiste de longue tradition. Où est donc l'utilité de dépenser une fortune en territoire déjà conquis ? Pourquoi ne pas s'attaquer à des centres névralgiques, comme Montréal-Nord, où la bataille se promet d'être féroce ? Remarquez, la même attitude prévaut pour le camp du NON : dans l'Ouest de l'île, on dit qu'il pleut des pancartes bleues et rouges...

C'est d'ailleurs dans le domaine publicitaire que le NON a gagné des points : il détient, à ce jour, le monopole sur les autobus. Partout à Montréal, leurs écriteaux avancent, reculent et dépassent par la droite. C'est en soi un juste retour des choses : le NON s'affiche dans le transport en commun et

la caravane souverainiste se déplace en autobus scolaire !

Par contre, le NON repère ses points difficilement gagnés dès qu'on discute esthétique. Connaissez-vous plus « drabe » comme message publicitaire ? Ah, cette fameuse séparation bleue et rouge... Le mot



est tellement divisé que plusieurs s'interrogent : « Ça veut dire quoi, sépa ? ». « Sais pas... ». En misant sur les couleurs idéologiques traditionnelles, le NON a voulu passer un message

certes clair et direct, mais pourtant si peu accrocheur !

À bien l'observer, la publicité peut être bien mal interprétée. Cette fleur de lys et cette feuille d'érable qui gravitent, vont-elles finir par se cogner l'une contre l'autre ? Sombre présage politique, continueront-elles longtemps à tourner en rond ? Le camp fédéraliste ne révolutionne décidément rien en matière de sollicitation stratégique. Il ne donne rien de bien concret

à se mettre sous la dent, d'autant plus qu'il n'a créé qu'un seul concept visuel pour la campagne référendaire.

Les affiches pour le OUI ont l'avantage d'être beaucoup plus vivantes : au bleu-PQ traditionnel on a substitué des couleurs énergiques et accrocheuses. On a également fait disparaître la fleur de lys pour laisser tout l'espace à un gros OUI stylisé. On a illustré une planète

pour symboliser l'ouverture sur le monde, un panneau de signalisation des employés de la construction pour signifier que le Québec allait se mettre au travail, un signe de « peace » pour dire « Dites OUI, qu'on nous sacre la paix... ». L'affiche du huard reste la plus ambiguë : est-ce une façon de dire qu'un Québec indépendant garderait la monnaie canadienne ? Elle pourrait aussi suggérer que le Québec, même souverain, resterait dans le Canada. Cela porte à confusion.

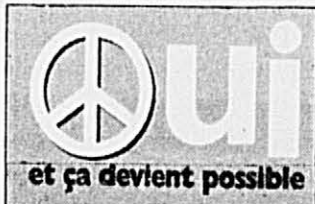
Toutefois, au-delà de ces dessins, amusants quoique manquant un peu de consistance, il y a

la devise « OUI, et ça devient possible ». La souveraineté devient possible, comme si elle ne l'était pas autant en 1980. Dans ce mot d'ordre, se mêle l'espoir et le désagréable manque de confiance en soi. Cela devient possible... Quelle sorte d'immense point d'interrogation plane au-dessus de ce slogan ?

Devant les publicités du OUI et du NON, on pourrait critiquer longtemps et s'attarder sur des pacotilles. Inutile de gaspiller encre et salive : il a été démontré que de tels batailles publicitaires, dans lesquels les

affiches d'un camp côtoient toujours celles de l'autre, n'ont que peu d'impact sur les intentions de vote. Il faudrait innover.

Pourquoi ne pas envahir le marché des publi-sacs ?



Au ras des pâquerettes!

OPINION

Anne Caporal et Emmanuelle M. Latraverse

Sans référence déplacée à la campagne fleurie du OUI, le débat référendaire vole de plus en plus bas : au ras des pâquerettes. La tournure que prend cette fin de campagne en irrite plus d'un. De quoi décourager les partisans et de quoi éloigner les indécis-es.

On est loin des combats exaltés de 1980 entre le OUI et le NON.

On est encore plus loin d'un débat au sein duquel des idées authentiques s'échangent et évoluent. Monsieur Bouchard est peut-être empreint du même genre de charisme

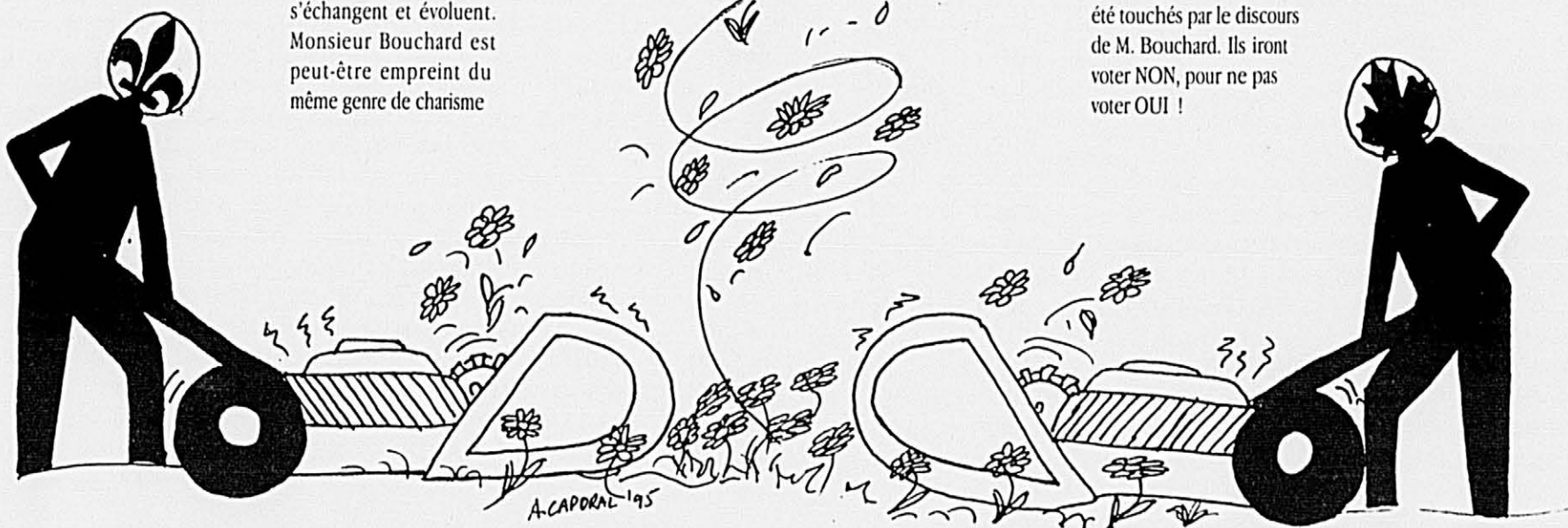
qu'avait René Lévesque, mais son discours n'est pas aussi solide et construit que celui de son prédécesseur. Monsieur Johnson est peut-être un homme très intelligent, mais il n'en demeure pas moins, que son discours est vide et peu convainquant. La population se replie donc vers le camp de la léthargie.

Les forces du OUI ne peuvent se détacher du classique discours émotif qui finalement ne s'adresse qu'aux « pure laine ». Ils n'ont pas encore pondu un argument raisonnable pour inciter les gens à voter OUI. De plus, voulant rallier le plus de gens à leur cause possible, ils n'osent présenter les vrais risques et enjeux de leur option

souverainiste. De son côté, la campagne du NON, face à la ferveur émotive de la campagne du OUI, se voue littéralement à une « campagne de peur ».

Où est le débat de fond ? Simplement nulle part. Qui a osé l'aborder ? Simplement personne. L'attaque mutuelle des camps l'a remplacée. Le OUI accuse le NON, qui se défend et accuse ensuite le OUI. Chacun se renvoie la balle, tente de préserver sa position. Le citoyen et la citoyenne sont mis de côté, pourtant c'est leur avenir qui est en jeu.

Le résultat, c'est que, mis à part les fédéralistes et souverainistes de nature, les autres électeurs et électrices, iront voter à reculons, sans conviction. Ils voteront OUI, s'il ont été touchés par le discours de M. Bouchard. Ils iront voter NON, pour ne pas voter OUI !



Le OUI, le NON *sur une balance de couleur violette*

OPINION
Richard P. Henri

À moins d'une semaine du référendum, les sondages indiquent que 14 p. cent de l'électorat est encore indécis. Il est à parier qu'il y aura encore beaucoup d'indécis 2 jours, même 2 heures, avant le moment de passer aux urnes. Ce sont ces Québécois et Québécoises, pas encore branchés, qui représentent les cibles de la campagne référendaire.

Chaque électeur hésitant, chaque électrice incertaine justifie les centaines de millions de dollars investis dans la campagne de chaque camp. Malgré les prédictions et les exercices statistiques auxquels se livrent analystes et spécialistes, le vote des indécis demeure imprévisible et déterminera irrémédiablement l'avenir du Québec. Ça, les deux partis ne l'ignorent pas... D'ailleurs, M. Parizeau, conscient

que seule une personne indécise sur quatre avait finalement voté OUI au référendum de 1980, exhortait récemment les jeunes souverainistes à partir en croisade. « Le pays est tout près, chacun de vous, allez convaincre un indécis ! », clamait-il jeudi dernier aux étudiants de l'Université de Montréal.

Il faut se questionner, mais surtout se réjouir de la présence d'un électoral qui brouille les cartes et qui ajoute du suspense à une campagne aussi prévisible et monotone que les sessions parlementaires : affirmations d'un camp, démentis de l'autre, chiffres d'un camp, études contradictoires de l'autre...

Le peuple de la Belle Province est constamment gavé d'informations et d'opinions contraires. S'il ne s'est pas fait une idée sur la souveraineté du Québec et sur le référendum depuis longtemps, il lui sera bien difficile de prendre une décision réfléchie à présent.

Plus de 10 p. cent de l'électorat voit double et s'imagine la fleur de lys et la feuille d'érable en violet. Pourtant, ils et elles ont le rare mérite de peser le pour et le contre dans une campagne déjà avancée où le débat est souvent confus.

L'indécision, c'est une escale. C'est l'étape par laquelle passent les électeurs et les électrices qui ont accepté d'ouvrir leurs oreilles et leurs cœurs aux arguments de l'autre camp, ou qui ont décidé de remettre en cause leurs propres arguments, leurs traditions et leurs préjugés.

Le fait que 14 p. cent des Québécois et Québécoises soient indécis, c'est une preuve que l'électorat se creuse les méninges et que les opinions évoluent. Être indécis, à 2 semaines du référendum, c'est rester ouvert aux opinions divergentes, se donner le temps de relire ses notes et se pourvoir de la faculté de décider avec une fébrile

rationalité, une intelligente passion.

Contrairement aux politiciens et politiciennes, l'électorat sait admettre ses torts et donner raison au camp opposé. En remettant en question les arguments qui fusent de tous côtés et en évitant l'aveugle partisanerie, il s'assure de voter pour le Québec de demain et non, dans un élan de tradition, pour des raisons oubliées.

Certaines décisions, comme celles que prendront individuellement des centaines de milliers de Québécois et de Québécoises le 30 octobre, ont un impact incalculable et irréversible. La course est plus serrée que jamais et chaque parti ne réclame que 50 p. cent des votes plus une voix pour se déclarer vainqueur. Si tout le monde votait comme si leur vote représentait cette voix décisive, garante du sort du Québec, il y aurait beaucoup plus d'indécis à 2 semaines du référendum...

Bonnet d'âne pour le président de l'UQAM

BRÈVE
Jean-François Corbett

Le Conseil d'administration de l'UQAM a temporairement suspendu, jeudi dernier, les pouvoirs de son président, Claude Garcia, suite au tollé de protestations qu'ont soulevé ses propos à l'égard des souverainistes. En effet, M. Garcia avait publiquement déclaré, le 24 septembre dernier, qu'il faudrait que les troupes fédéralistes « écrasent » les tenants de la souveraineté.

L'Université du Québec explique cette décision par la controverse qu'ont provoquées les envolées de M. Garcia. Selon les documents

émis par l'UQAM et son Conseil d'administration (CA), cette polémique aurait compris « le lien de confiance qui doit exister entre le président du CA et la communauté universitaire » et « le climat serein qui doit prévaloir au sein du CA ». Bref, les membres du CA jugent « fortement hypothéquée » la capacité de M. Garcia de représenter l'UQAM.

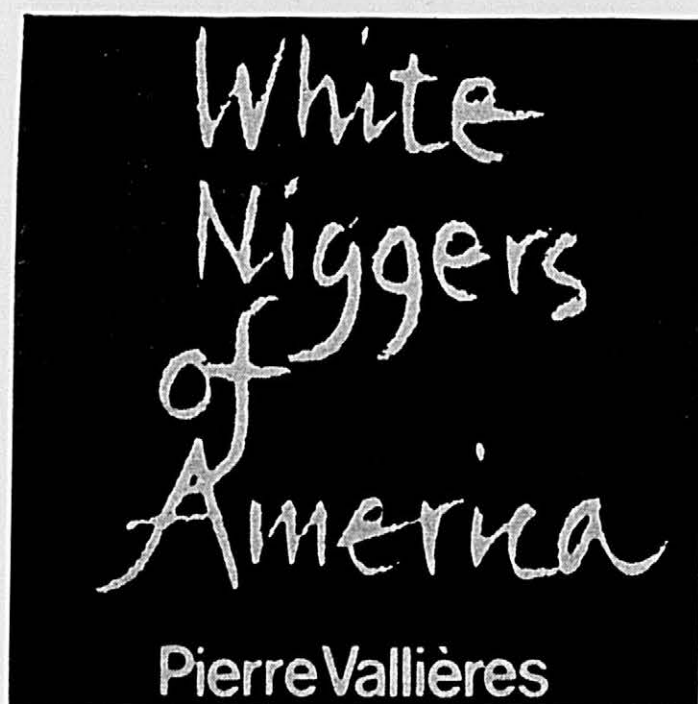
Les membres du CA ont donc majoritairement adopté une résolution retirant provisoirement à M. Garcia tous ses pouvoirs de président du CA. « Toutefois, M. Garcia n'a pas été démis de ses fonctions. En termes juridiques, il est toujours président et membre du Conseil », souligne Josette Guimont, du service des relations publiques de l'UQAM.

Ce verdict a été accueilli avec exubérance à l'Association générale étudiante des secteurs sciences humaines, arts, lettres et communications de l'UQAM (AGESSHALC UQAM), qui revendique la démission de M. Garcia depuis le 27 septembre. « Cette décision marque la victoire de la démocratie et du respect sur le radicalisme de certains ténors fédéralistes », de clamer Patricio Salgado, responsable général de l'AGESSHALC UQAM.

Le CA de l'UQAM tranchera la question de façon plus définitive lors d'une réunion spéciale qui se tiendra en novembre. Le seul point à l'ordre du jour de cette réunion sera le sort de M. Garcia.

INTERVIEW WITH PIERRE VALLIÈRES

CONT'D FROM PAGE 8



Written from a prison cell, this book is one of Québec's important radical history texts.

gether locally, nationally and internationally, with the excuse of creating order, but instead permitting the exploitation of people, the exploitation of resources. This order in fact creates more disorder than order. We cannot put aside solidarity. We can't let it go, so that justice would not be the ideal we seek. Because we're looking for peace, to have peace. But when they talk about peace it's not a peace we have to build, but a peace that will be given to us miraculously. We can't have peace in an unjust world. That's impossible. In an unjust world, you can have nothing but conflicts — malice, bitterness and vengeance.

What's happening in the former Yugoslavia, in Croatia, in Bosnia-Herzegovina in particular, what they experience at the level of each family, each individual, each village, each city are very difficult things to live through physically and morally. The brutality, the barbarity are such a difficult experience that one can't just wait for a peaceful settlement, for docility, so that the world would all of a sudden be healed for those who live there.

That's why it's so important to prevent situations like this. It's necessary to prevent them, it's necessary for civil society in each place that believes in democracy, whether it's a city, a country, a collection of countries — that each place that believes in democracy favour debate, favour mutual aid, favour cooperation and solidarity. I don't see any other recipe.

In the current referendum discourse, you don't hear anything about the values of solidarity. What we hear about most is cutting budgets for single mothers, childcare.

Ultimately I believe in a form of socialism, that is as self-managed as possible. But what does that mean today? But I believe in that. I don't believe in Stalinism, I don't believe in the dictatorship of one political party any more than in the dictatorship of a state or an army. I believe in form of socialism, of sharing, of solidarity, of social justice. We can't do otherwise without falling into barbarity one day. There is no people that is free of that.

Today in Eastern Europe it's particularly the Balkans that are immediately touched. Tomorrow it could be the United States, it could be Québec, it could be Montréal that falls into barbarity, it could be Toronto or Winnipeg. All the ingredients are there, everywhere. There is no justice. It doesn't take a lot for a situation to degenerate.

How have your political engagements changed since you left the FLQ?

In political engagements I don't constrain myself to the interior of a party. As I just said, I believe in a form of socialism, in engagement on the socialist Left. Not the social-democratic Left, who try to conciliate. I am more radical than that. I believe that radical changes have to be made in the world, in society. If I engaged myself politically I would engage myself in a country or a party that does not consider the economy as does the totalitarian ideology of neo-liberalism, the totalitarianism of the rich. It's the Western fundamentalism. I would engage myself in a political party that could criticise the neo-liberal fundamentalism with the same en-

ergy, the same light, the same freedom of thought, that it would with Muslim fundamentalism, with Communism, with other totalitarianisms.

Neo-liberalism is itself an ideology. It's an ideology that was born in the 17th and 18th century that crystallised in the 19th century. And look at all the fine speakers of the 20th century who have promised paradise on Earth since the Second World War. But we are still looking for it! How many wars have we had since the Second World War — 450?

So now we feel pity for the people of Eastern Europe who were not prepared at all for the fall of Communism. They are totally panic-stricken by this new world, the Occidental one, that has fallen onto them from the sky. They were brought up believing that money grew on the trees in North America and in Western Europe. But if we experience the same thing, which is possible and probable, if our balloon bursts (the one of arms, drugs and speculation) it won't be a pretty sight.

If you know about a political party that talks about real advantages, I will devote myself to it. But if you are talking about a system that just wants to rationalise the health care system or education...

During the '60s, were you more interested in nationalism?

My engagement was the same but the vehicle was called le Front de libération du Québec [FLQ]. But I wasn't involved in political groups, only in the FLQ. I was never a member of a nationalist or socialist party because I did not find one that would answer the needs of my radical thinking.

No, the FLQ wasn't a nationalist group but a social revolution that was based, like the one in Cuba, on a national liberation. The liberation, and we should not forget that this was in the mid-'60s, that is 30 years ago, we truly believed that Québec was more advanced than the rest of North America in its social con-

sciousness. Even the Black Panthers thought that we were more advanced and the Left in anglo Canada saw us as promoting social change.

So we thought that we would start the revolution here and that it would go on to the rest. But we were taking the Marxist historical point of view, that is that we don't believe in revolution in one homeland, one country. This is a reality of Marxism: neither capital nor revolution has a homeland. So we thought that Québec would be the lever in North America. So by becoming independent, in the same way that Castro approached this issue in the Cuban Revolution — to become independent of the tutelage the U.S. had over Cuba at the time of Batista. This is what we were talking about, not about "sovereignty" and even less "sovereignty-association". And in my *Nègres blancs d'Amérique* [White Niggers of America], I denounced the sovereigntists as such. I have never been a nationalist.

It is always the same fight as the one in the '60s but I do not find anymore a sufficiently important group to lead it. I still work with "popular" groups but politically they do not have a future. They answer more to emergency situations: feeding the people on the street, the people who have psychological problems left on the streets. The daily emergencies that get to people. The daily problems keep those groups from getting involved in politics. But one needs to have a sense of priorities. One cannot write and work 24 hours per day. We used to have nuns to take care of that but now it is the "groupes populaires".

What have your more recent engagements been?

They have been those of a person concerned with justice, partly in my writing for Bosnia. Because I find that Bosnia is an example of a multi-ethnic and multicultural country that had created an existence based on

tolerance and coexistence and with progressive socialist ideas, more progressive than elsewhere, but faced with a difficult ideological and economical situation — but that nonetheless drowned itself in nationalism, or several nationalisms, and went back to a barbarous stage. And this for political and metaphysical reasons.

Can we say that societies that suffered from the First and Second World Wars, and from previous empires, and who lived the horrors of Nazism, who then looked for comfort after the war and a way to live in harmony, did they find an antidote to barbarism? I cannot answer but it certainly explains my engagement.

I also found in Sarajevo a highly politicised society that is aware of its history and that did not throw it away at the same time as it rejected communism. They still know how to praise Tito for the unification, for the resistance, for the fight against fascism, despite the faults of the political regime. They are also very courageous people who have managed to resist aggressions that we can't imagine here, with no means at all. We should not forget that the siege of Sarajevo is the longest in modern history, that it is still going on, after three and a half years. The population has resisted, without water, electricity, communication with the outside world; without gas, natural resources, and some weeks without food. This is a modern society, a secular one, that has managed to resist in such conditions.

This is an extraordinary example. For me, it is a moral lesson, it is about human dignity, solidarity. Everything there is more important than everything we talk about here. For me, to experience that there is everything. There is nothing happening right now in Québec. Nothing in Québec is worth as much as what one can see in Sarajevo right now. We talk about human dignity and it is priceless. So this is it. It is a *coup de coeur*.

The economics of sovereignty:

By DOMINIQUE NOUVET

Many people think that the Parti Québécois, in discussing the economic implications of sovereignty, has been simplistic if not dishonest.

Publications like *La souveraineté: des réponses à vos questions* convey the impression that voters need not be concerned about the economic aspect of separation. What follows are some of the key statements from the *réponses* regarding the economics of sovereignty accompanied by a more critical analysis of the issues.

The *Daily* asked two economics professors for their views of the PQ's promises. McGill Professor William Watson analysed the promises as a federalist, while Professor Rodriguo Tremblay of l'Université de Montréal, ex-minister of industry and commerce in the first Lévesque government, offered his views as a Yes campaign supporter.

CANADIAN-QUÉBEC COOPERATION: "the federal government will open dialogues with Québec rapidly to reach [economic] agreements"

While Tremblay does expect Ottawa to be cooperative, he says it is due more to the pressures of the business community than to the PQ.

"Politicians are paid and financed behind the scenes... [business people] are calling the shots... The economic and financial system of Québec is controlled from Toronto, and I don't think that these people will want to lose 25 per cent of their business."

Watson, for his part, expects voters in the rest of Canada to object strongly to negotiations with Québec in the event of a Yes vote. As such, he suggests that the PQ's confidence is unfounded.

"The Péquiste view is that English Canada is unemotional and cares only about money. That is not true... It's certain that there will be a segment of Canada that will favour a scorched earth policy towards Québec. Whether it will be a majority, I don't know."

Watson adds that "it's foolish to say at the moment that you know how English Canada will react."

CURRENCY: "Québec will continue to use the Canadian dollar."

Tremblay does not even discuss the viability of this statement, questioning instead its very truthfulness: "It's one of the weakest links in the Parizeau platform," he says.

He explains that Parizeau and other PQ members have already expressed a desire for an independent Québec currency, and thus feels "foreign lenders may think that it is part of a political ploy to inspire confidence... No one knows on this question."



GRAPHIC BY MAX FRANCISCO

Watson, accepting the premise that the PQ genuinely intends to keep the Canadian dollar, agrees that the plan is feasible. He adds, however, that Québec "will have no say in monetary policy."

As such, the Canadian Central Bank would continue to influence the new country's interest rates and money supply, which in turn would affect economic growth rate. Québec would therefore have one less macroeconomic tool at its disposal.

TRADE WITH CANADA: "Goods, services, capital and people will continue to circulate between Québec and Canada as freely as they do today."

Tremblay agrees that free circulation can continue between Canada and an independent Québec. In fact, he challenges the federal government's counter-argument that Canada's duty to offer the same rights and privileges to all North American Free Trade Agreement members precludes any other special arrangements.

Federal Finance Minister Paul Martin articulated the federal position in a speech on September 26. "[By negotiating] an economic partnership similar to the one we now enjoy... Canada would be jeopardising hard-won, major trade advantages."

Tremblay responds bluntly, "This is a stupid

argument."

He does not see why a special agreement could not exist between Canada and the former province, citing as an example the fact that "between Belgium and Luxembourg there is a monetary agreement that does not exist in the rest of the European Union."

Watson's response focuses on the PQ's claim that there will be no borders between Québec and the rest of Canada. "Unless Québec has the same tariff structure, there's going to have to be a border." Otherwise, back-door trading could occur.

If, for example, Québec were to impose a lower tariff on French wine, the product could be imported into this country and then brought into the rest of Canada without the latter receiving its custom duties.

If Québec does wish to maintain full production factors' and goods' mobility, Watson insists it will have to sacrifice autonomy over its tariff policy to follow Canada's lead.

NAFTA: "Québec will take its place quite naturally in this large market."

Here, both Tremblay and Watson agree that Québec will be accepted into NAFTA but that it will have to satisfy demands made by the United States. Watson expresses this in simple terms, "Québec will get in, but at a price determined by the U.S. Congress... I think that Congress will ask a lot of things that Québec won't want to do."

Watson cites the example of the highly protected dairy industry, where the government has traditionally kept foreign producers out of the market in order to maintain the income of Québec dairy farmers.

He expects that the United States will demand a rapid end to this.

THE COSTS OF SOVEREIGNTY: "There is no reason why everything cannot be done logically, serenely, and put into place without dramatic economic effects." (Michel Bélanger, quoted by the PQ)

Tremblay thinks this is possible, particularly if the Québec government takes its

time to negotiate the economic aspects of sovereignty before declaring the province independent.

However, he doubts the willingness of Canadian negotiators to cooperate, stating, "I think that the politicians in Canada stink."

Watson sees the early transition period as inevitably disruptive. "Even in a friendly breakup, there will be an uncomfortable interregnum... The symptoms of that will be a declining Canadian dollar and rising interest rates... I would think that investment in Québec will become more risky."

However, both economists agree on the long term economic impact of sovereignty: The Québec government will have to implement drastic changes to attack the deficit and make Québec attractive to investors.

As Tremblay states, "The PQ is over-indebted now... They will have to clean up their fiscal act... [Sovereignty] will bring politicians back down to earth, where they don't want to be."

"I think it means tougher times than if you stay as part of the federation," concurs Watson.

Echoing Tremblay's prediction, he adds that, "If you're a right-wing economist, you're going to like separation. It's going to force [corporate] taxes down, cut government and cause a confrontation with unions... The best way to attack the welfare state is to separate."

Clearly, there can be no definitive predictions on sovereignty's economic outcomes. These depend on too many variables, including the reaction of the rest of Canada, the ability of both sides to cooperate, the faith of investors and of the international community.

What is indisputable is that, as Tremblay and Watson express, the PQ's statements concerning the economics of separation contain flaws and omissions.

Tremblay is particularly vehement in condemning not only the PQ, but all politicians for their referendum strategy. "[In the last referendum in 1980] Mr. Lévesque was a bit more candid and Mr. Ryan was a bit more rigorous in his reasoning... [This time] both sides have adopted a fear campaign, and are underestimating the intelligence of the electorate."

NO ONE WILL SEPARATE US

Montréal's queer community supports neither the Yes nor the No side

BY ANDREA MASON

Declining to support either the Yes or No camp in the Québec referendum, the gay and lesbian community of Montréal is focusing its energies on advancing the concerns of its members at every level of government.

In discussions entitled "Our future in Québec," the Consultation Table of Gays and Lesbians of Greater Montréal decided that it would not participate in the referendum debate in order to avoid alienating any of its members.

According to Michael Hendricks, president of the Table, the divisions in members' views would erode the organisation's unity.

"[The Table] is painful in terms of representation," said Hendricks. "We are dominated by francophone men; there are few anglophones."

Unity is important to the Table, as they "know that once the referendum happens, our battle is going to begin," said Hendricks.

For this reason, the Table has begun a series of discussions on the topic of solidarity within the gay and lesbian community.

It should be noted, however, that this is the same community many bisexuals and transgendered people charge with not recognising them.

Pressuring both sides

John Fischer, the Table's national president, stated, "Now is the time to push every party to be pro-active in granting equal rights to gays and lesbians."

Successive Québec governments have traditionally been more open than other Canadian governments to the need for increased gay and lesbian rights. So, said Hendricks, the gay and lesbian community has a better chance of gaining equal rights in Québec than in Canada. He added, "this is regardless of whether or not the province separates."

The Parti Québécois was the first to include a section on gay rights in its provincial Human Rights Charter.

Hendricks said gays and lesbians have traditionally had a measure of influence on the Québec government that is unique among the provinces. He cited the lack of opposition to changes in the Québec

Charter of Human Rights as an example. "We didn't hear a peep from the rank and file members of the National Assembly," said Hendricks.

Now that the PQ is looking for as much support from social groups as possible, Hendricks maintained that "they are going to be nice to us."

For example, the PQ established a committee to analyse issues of violence against gays and lesbians earlier this month. This is an important step, because violence, especially by the police, has been an issue of concern in the community.

No help from the feds

On the federal side, Hendricks said that a surge of "racist and sexist attacks by the Canadian parliament and other provinces are not hopeful for us or others like the visible minorities."

Jean Chrétien's Liberal government has been reluctant to grant rights to gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered communities.

The hate crimes bill, which would have made discrimination against gays and lesbians a hate crime, was struck down last September. In the process of the debate, many homophobic statements were made by members of the Liberal party.

Fischer stated that the federal government's failure to pass the bill "damages the Liberals' credibility and pushes people in the direction of sovereignty."

Gloria Escomeil, Montréal writer and former director of the Table in Montréal, said the federal government's failure to pass the hate crimes bill reflects a political shift to the right.

The same type of trend was displayed last year when the

face of tough economic times, human rights, and particularly gay rights, are often overlooked."

However, Escomeil is also skeptical of the PQ's promises that the gay and lesbian community will be granted full rights in a sovereign Québec. She noted that gays and lesbians are still waiting for the PQ to deliver on a campaign promise to recognise same-sex marital rights.

And Québec society is far from ideal in its treatment of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people. Just last May, Montréal hosted the annual international conference of Human Life International, an ardently homophobic, extreme right group.

Escomeil stressed the need to examine the PQ's orientation on social issues before voting 'Yes' in the referendum. She suggested it might be in the interest of the gay and lesbian community to wait for a better, more just, provincial government before supporting a bid for sovereignty.

But in the end, Escomeil added, the gay and lesbian community will have to accept the result of the referendum and make the best of the political situation that follows.

Room for optimism

Hendricks remains optimistic, preferring to look at



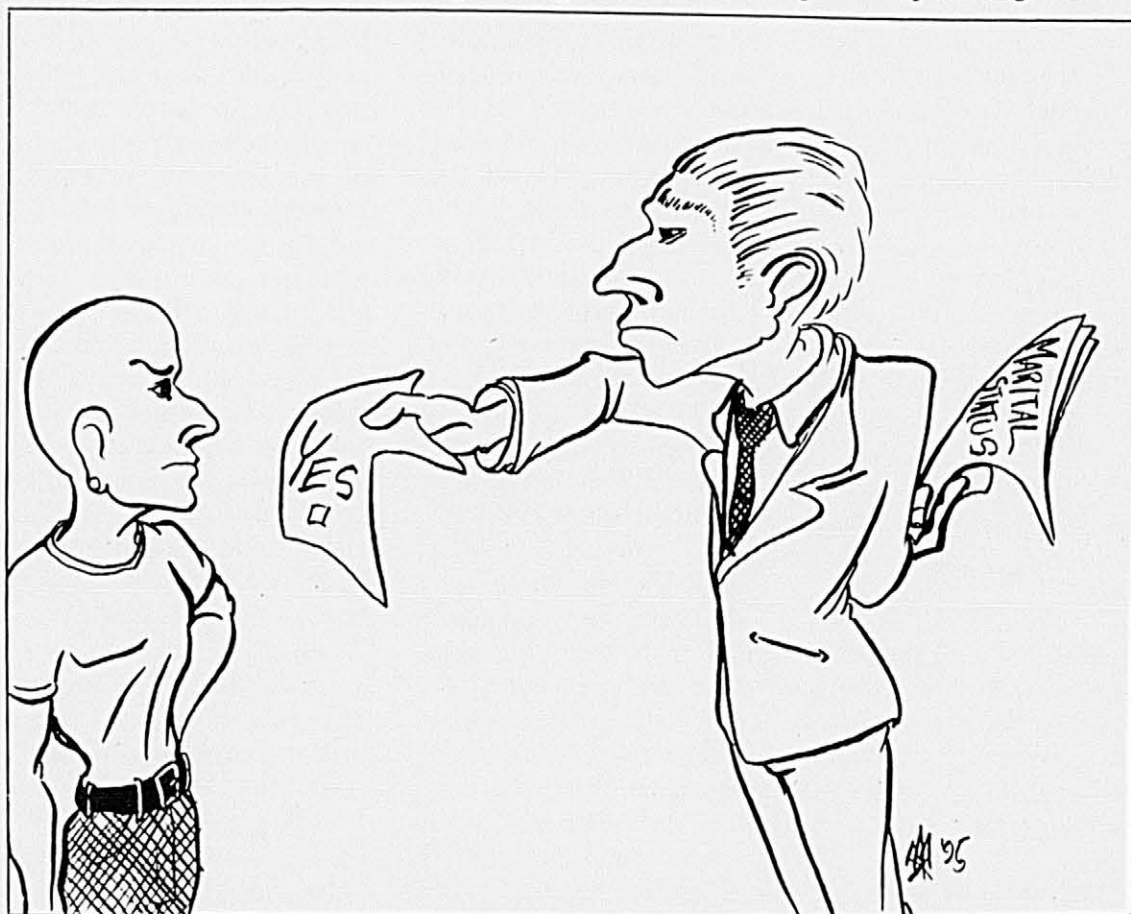
DAILY PHOTO BY CAMERON BOOTH

Would Parizeau turn his back on the gay community in an independent Québec?

Ontario legislature failed to pass a bill granting spousal benefits to same-sex couples.

And at the provincial level...

Escomeil said that prospects for the advancement of gay rights at the federal level do not look promising. She stated, "In



GRAPHIC BY MAX FRANCISCO

the potential for significant steps in the struggle for gay and lesbian rights in a sovereign Québec.

Talking specifically about education, he commented that it is difficult to make changes that would address gay and lesbian issues in schools under the current system.

"Currently, the BNA [British North America] Act condemns Québec to religious schools," explained Hendricks. He said that religious doctrines will continue to be prevalent in Québec schools, as will the conflict between the Roman Catholic Church and the gay community until gays and lesbians are free to establish their own schools.

The provincial school system is currently being reviewed by the "états généraux" commission through a series of public forums. The Table decided not to participate because, Hendricks revealed, "We are ignored and usually targeted [in the discussion process]." He seemed to suggest that there might be more room for discussion with the collapse of some of the usual structures.

Hendricks also stated that it may be possible to repatriate the criminal code to include counseling and assistance for the perpetrators of hate crimes, as well as same-sex marriage rights within a sovereign Québec.

"The gay and lesbian community would only have one parliament to fight with our limited resources," Hendricks stated. "It's easier to attack one [government] than two."

But some members of the Table are concerned that sovereignty would threaten the solidarity that exists between Québec's gay and lesbian community and other such communities in the rest of Canada.

In general, though, the Table is not worried that a Yes vote would affect the gay and lesbian community's connections to other groups across the country.

Escomeil described the gay and lesbian community as "the most international group in the world."

"Out of necessity we established alliances of solidarity between the members of our community not only in Canada, but in the United States, Europe and Latin America as well. No one wants this issue to separate us."

THE QUESTION IS, HOW WILL THEY VOTE?



DAILY PHOTO BY CAMERON BOOTH

Québec women march against poverty...are their issues being addressed in the Referendum debate?

BY LEXI GARLAND

People watching the referendum debate would see anything but neutrality in the fast becoming vicious arguments. Last week, Bloc Québécois leader Lucien Bouchard incited disbelief and anger among many Québec women by referring to low birth rates among white Québec women — a statement that brought charges of racism and sexism from the No side, and disapproval from some in the Yes camp.

Throughout the past few weeks of campaigning, however, some women's organisations have adopted a position of political neutrality on the Referendum. They have focused instead on education around specific issues as a main tool for addressing women, enabling them to participate and vote on October 30.

In part, the decision to take a neutral stand was made because many women feel their views are not being addressed properly by either the Yes or No sides. Anne Kettenbeil, the francophone vice-president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) says that "the opinion is that women have been turned off, on both sides of the debate. That it's an empty debate and a debate that doesn't really relate very well to women." Kettenbeil added that she would "have to see whether women are being listened to or not" in the remaining days before the referendum, before coming to her own decision.

The demand to be listened to is one that's been made by Québec women on the provin-

cial policy arena often in recent months. In May and June, over 4,000 women marched across Québec to send a strong message to the Parti Québécois government about women and poverty in the province. The Bread and Roses March, organised by the Fédération des Femmes de Québec (FFQ), made demands on the government to, among other things, reduce the amount of years immigrant women sponsored by their husbands must wait before being granted citizenship.

While not all of the FFQ demands were met, the government agreed to reduce the years immigrant women must wait from 10 to three; it also set up a committee of women's groups representatives to advise the government on social policy.

Since then, pressure on the PQ government has been kept up. Perhaps partly in response to these and other factors, both campaigns have targeted women as a group whose vote needs to be pulled. The Yes side

paign for the No, organised the group of women in order to speak to women "who never got involved politically [before this campaign]." She added that "It's [political involvement] more fun in a women's group. They often feel more comfortable; they get more of their words in on how things should be done."

Through different lenses

While most Québec women see the Referendum issue as one of economics and, as Kettenbeil says, analagous to a divorce, their unified stand ends there.

Lyne Barbeau of Entre-Femmes, a group for homemakers who meet regularly, noted in a French interview with the *Daily* that although women may feel "very insecure, very worried" about the upcoming referendum and its related issues of language and economy, they are looking at it through two different sets of eyes.

The different perspectives are touched on by leaders of women's organisations. Kettenbeil, for example, says that language is a reason for separation because "it is impossible to use French outside of Québec."

But Women's Canadian Club Vice-President Renée Prudame, campaigning for the No, wondered whether the French language would survive even in an independent Québec. "In the long run...the French language, within a hundred years, will not be there any more, because if you look at the map, Québec is right between Ontario and the Eastern prov-

While women in Québec are undecided and pondering the possible futures for their children and their province, neither sides are really addressing their immediate concerns

has issued colourful pamphlets and placards with a women's sign drawn into the "Oui," and both sides have promised the economic betterment and equality of women should their side win.

Chantal Coriveau, head of Impact '95, a women's cam-

Everyone agrees women have a lot at stake in the Referendum

inces, then bordering on the U.S. So they will trade north, and south with the United States and [I] doubt that the U.S. will learn French to please the people from Chibougamou." She added that "If they want to trade with the U.S, they will have to speak English; so their children will have to learn English whether they want to or not."

Taking the neutral ground

Despite these differing ideas of what the referendum issues are, several groups have adopted a position of neutrality. Commenting on the recent Yes position taken by the FFQ, Kettenbeil noted that "The most interesting debate was the one within the FFQ...about whether the FFQ should take a position or not, and I think it pretty much reflects the thinking of a lot of women's groups within

to work, women like me, who would have gone on October 30 and just done anything."

The Women's Canadian Club also takes great interest in education. Prudame explained her role as an educator to undecided groups. "We go in to talk about Canada as a whole, and the economy within Canada.... We don't try to openly convince them; we say what we think and feel. We're people like them; we're mothers, grandmothers, students.

Answers hard to come by

While women in Québec are undecided and pondering the possible futures for their children and their province, neither sides are really addressing their immediate concerns. Josee DesMarais, a counselor at Maison Florant Tristant, cites minimum wages and better resources for single-mothers and abused women as some of the issues she would like her government to be addressing. Other areas of economic concern raised by Québec women include reforms on welfare and better

"Women are the poorest of the poor, and women know damn well that they are the first ones who are going to be affected if there is an economic consequence," Anne Kettenbeil, NAC

Québec, as that of neutrality versus the women's movement getting directly involved with the debate." She added that women were urging the FFQ to remain neutral.

The idea that women's groups should remain neutral, focusing instead on educating and informing women about the issues at hand, and encouraging them to participate, is not new.

During the 1992 Charlottetown Accord debate, NAC developed the stand it now sticks to. According to Kettenbeil, "NAC recognises the three founding nations — the French speaking nation, the English speaking nation, and of course the Native nation — and therefore the right of self-determination." Respecting this right has meant that NAC has chosen not to get involved except as instructor, to help women make an informed choice.

Although she is working for the No, Chantal Coriveau agrees. The basis of forming Impact '95 was "to get women

alimony laws, according to Lyne Barbeau, an activities coordinator at Entre-Femmes.

Although it is clear that women are among those who have the most at stake in the Referendum outcome, if their concerns are not sufficiently addressed, they may not vote at all.

"Women are the poorest of the poor, and women know damn well that they are the first ones who are going to be affected if there is an economic consequence," Kettenbeil said of the Referendum, adding that "women know what the consequences of inequality are. They know that if women aren't there to represent women, then their issues aren't going to be on the front burner, they're going to be on the back burner."

It is the knowledge of this which will, in the hopes of both the No and Yes campaigns, bring women to the polling stations on October 30 to try to sway the outcome toward what is best for Québec women.

With files from the *Daily*.

AN ISLAND OF OPINION

Montréalers face the referendum

By DUNCAN MCPHERSON

In his quest to divide Canada, Premier Jacques Parizeau is dividing Québec. Many Montréalers, as if isolated by their island, have taken a stand on separation opposite that of the rest of Québec.

According to a recent newspaper poll, 35 per cent of Montréal respondents support the Yes side and 50 per cent the No, a virtual mirror image of the statistics for the rest of Québec,

where 36 per cent support the No side, and 51 per cent the Yes.

Some people, among them Daniel Mercier, a principle organizer for the Yes vote in Montréal, would suggest that demographic reasons account for Montréal's distance from the rest of Québec. According to the most recent Statistics Canada census, the city is home to approximately 74 per cent of Québec's anglophones and 88 per cent of the province's new immigrants. Roughly 74 per cent of the general Québec population describe their ethnic origin as French, while in Montréal these Quebecers number only 58 per cent.

Mercier says that the concentration of minorities on the island makes his job "more challenging" and describes his main task as convincing minorities that their rights will be maintained in a sovereign Québec. He quickly points out that such rights are entrenched in the PQ's Draft Bill on Sovereignty.

"Pollycock," responds Russell Williams, committee member for the No side and National Assembly representative for Montréal's Nelligan riding. "Actions speak louder than words."

Williams is skeptical that paper promises will defend his rights as an anglophone in an independent Québec and points to the continuous under-funding of English universities and Cégeps as proof that the PQ is not committed to anglophone rights.

Williams cites PQ decisions to close English hospitals such as the Queen Elizabeth and Reddy Memorial as further evidence against the PQ's assertions that they take anglophone issues to heart.

"The PQ will say anything to anyone to get their vote," concludes Williams.

He dismisses the argument that the concentration of minorities in Montréal explains the city's attachment to Canada as "a typical separatist position," because francophones are by far the most numerous group in Montréal. Williams added that because Montréalers are exposed to less than ideal conditions in other countries, they will vote No, aware that they "are defending the best country in the world."

But even the "best country

in the world" can stand some improvement. Alfie Roberts, secretary of the St. Vincent and Grenadines Association in Montréal, says he is disillusioned by Canada but unimpressed by separatist arguments. He believes that Canadian multiculturalism means "nothing" for the average black person.

All the same, Roberts says he will vote No. Speaking of an independent Québec, he states "Life will be tougher and will have the most effect on people who already have so little, especially blacks."

Roberts considers the PQ's ambitions both elitist and nationalist and termed them the "height of irresponsibility." He wonders why the PQ is wasting money on a referendum that could be spent on improving people's lives. For reasons such as these, Roberts hopes a No vote will force the PQ back into responsible governing through which issues of real importance, notably education and employment, can be brought to the foreground.

Regardless of the referendum's result, it is questionable whether the PQ will make any effort to cross the political gulf that separates it from Montréalers or to provide the responsible government envisioned by Roberts. Queen Eliza-

beth surgeon Larry Lincoln, for example, has asserted that the PQ was willing to close Montréal hospitals because as a Liberal stronghold, "this is not their side."

In the 1994 provincial elections, 21 out of 30 Montréal ridings voted Liberal. "The PQ has ignored us because we are in a Liberal riding, so they don't really care if we close down or not," explains Lincoln.

And yet both Williams and Mercier insist that federalist Montréal will not be balkanized after the referendum. The government in Québec will not be able to ignore the city's 46 per cent chunk of Québec voters, Williams says. Mercier points out that both federalist and separatist MNAs from east Montréal signed a letter demanding greater resources for the public medical clinics in their area. He considers this proof positive that both sides can band together for the good of the city.

Williams and Mercier claim that the rifts between Montréal and the rest of Québec will be healed.

Whether such partisan claims will be substantiated remains to be seen, but the government can start by addressing real issues facing Montréalers like Lincoln and Roberts.

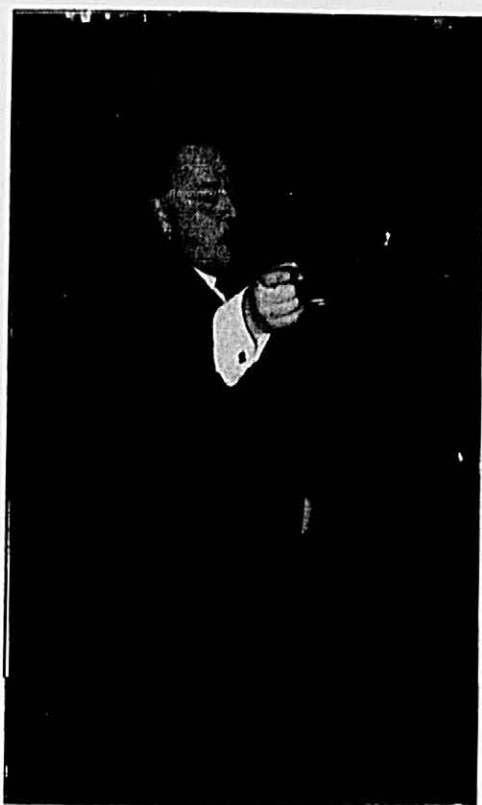


PHOTO BY CAMERON BOOTH

ENTERING THE FRAY

Montréal universities take a stand... or not

By MERA THOMPSON AND ROBIN PERELLE

With the referendum debate reaching a fever pitch, the city's two francophone universities - the Université de Montréal and the Université du Québec à Montréal - have taken decidedly pro-sovereignist stands.

Across town, both McGill's and Concordia's student associations have demonstrated a startling disinterest in the future of this province.

Concordia University's Student Union (CSU) made it quite clear that it was "not taking a view on the upcoming Québec referendum."

When further questioned, VP Academic Sam Tabar conceded that his association did, of course, "have views" on the issue, but that the CSU would not "officially" take a position on the referendum.

Although the CSU is about to launch a campus-wide refer-

endum in part to investigate the issue of sovereignty, the ballot question phrased "Do you support Québec independence?" is not its chief concern.

According to Tabar, the question will only be used as a sort of "temperature taking of the political climate" at the university.

Of greater concern to Tabar is the question regarding the "Real Choices" campaign, the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations' proposal for alternative funding of post-secondary education.

"The only thing that concerns the CSU is that there is an upcoming referendum [on Real Choices] that doesn't concern the provincial one," said Tabar.

Here at McGill, the Students' Society has been equally uninterested in the prospects of separation.

When questioned by the *Daily*, VP External Nick Benedict dismissed the issue, saying he didn't have a "fuck of

a lot" to say about the future of Québec.

Both SSMU and CSU have chosen to remain neutral on an "externally divisive" issue, despite the impact separation will have on the students they claim to represent.

In the meantime, francophone universities are examining the issues surrounding the referendum.

Despite having taken a pro-sovereignty stance, the students' society of Université de Québec à Montréal acknowledged that a separate Québec may be as unsympathetic to accessible education as Canada is.

"We know what we can expect from the federal government in terms of subsidies, but we don't know what will happen to that financial aid in a separate Québec," said Patrick Chartrand, vp external of UQAM's students' society.

According to Chartrand, students may face soaring tuition fees no matter how they

vote, because there is no guarantee that Québec would be more attentive to student needs than Ottawa.

La Fédération étudiante universitaire de Québec (FEUQ) echoed Chartrand's ambivalence, suggesting that the referendum could prove to be a lose-lose situation for students.

But FEUQ President François Rebello said he thinks that staying in Canada would leave students in a more vulnerable position. "Today there is a bigger ideological difference between Québec and Ottawa... The people of Québec see their tax dollars going to Ottawa and they don't know if they'll get money back for education."

Chartrand insisted, however, that a separate Québec could continue to pursue its current educational policy, as tuition fees here have been the lowest in Canada for the past few decades.

The campus with the strongest and least ambivalent

views on the referendum is Université de Montréal.

Patrick Howe, external affairs coordinator of UdeM's students' society, gave his own views as to why students favor separation.

"After having spoken to a number of students, I feel that they are tired of hearing talks," he stated. "They want to get the process over with. The students want change and the only constitutional option synonymous with change is that of saying Yes to sovereignty."

In Howe's opinion, Quebecers will get only a year of constitutional debate by voting Yes. By voting No, they would allow the process to continue indefinitely once again.

The political climate at UdeM is strongly supportive of sovereignty, said Howe, commenting, "The non-separatists have a lot of work to do."

With additional reporting by Ambreen Saleh

A union divided

Social Services union won't support sovereignty without vision



DAILY PHOTO BY DAVID RYHER

The PQ's social vision : cutting funding

BY ANUP GREWAL

If there is one ally that the Parti Québécois has always relied on in its drive towards an independent Québec, it is the province's labour union, the Confederation des syndicats nationales (CSN). This consistent support base, however, may be eroding as it becomes hard to differentiate the politics of the current PQ leadership, under Jacques Parizeau, from that of the federal government.

Louis Roy, of the Fédération des affaires sociales (FAS), a part of the CSN, says that the recent attempts by the PQ to "dismantle" the health and social services shows a party that lacks a "social vision."

In May, provincial Health Minister Jean Rochon presented a package of reforms to the Québec health care system. In an effort to cut \$90 million from the system, the minister, with the support of the Regional Board of Health and Social Services in Montréal proposed the closure of nine hospitals in the city by 1997. The plan vaguely outlines the increased role of CLSCs (the province's public clinics) and extended in-home care as alternatives to what they consider redundant hospital services. However, the ministry has done little research into either the effects of its re-

form package or how it will redistribute its resources effectively.

There has been an outcry from many socially oriented groups about the effects the reforms will have on the quality of health services. Those who work in the health and social services sector are also concerned.

Jeff Begely, also of the FAS, predicted that there will be a loss of 12 000 jobs if one counts part time workers as well.

This was of obvious concern to the FAS, which, with a membership of 100 000, represents workers in the health and social services sector in the public and private domain, including office personnel, psychologists and nurses.

According to Begely, the plan by the minister, has no concrete way of assuring job security and replacement work for those who will be displaced by the cuts.

Begely comments that "we are not opposed to the re-organisation of the health system. That is okay. We are opposed, though, to the way it is being done without a plan and [with] no consideration except the economics of the government."

This last view — that the PQ is concentrating more efforts on trimming its budgets than working for an equitable

society — was the rub for Roy and other leaders of the FAS.

"We are very worried," concedes Roy.

For Roy, the PQ "is neither representative of our members nor our political orientation, which is to protect the workers."

Beginning in May, the FAS, under the leadership of Roy, contested the CSN's uncritical support of the PQ's sovereignty project, announcing that it was withdrawing its own support. Basically, says Roy, "we say 'Yes' to sovereignty and 'No' to the PQ."

No social vision

For many, the FAS' critical stand on the PQ's politics came as a surprise, considering that the labour movement of Québec has historically been tied to the drives for independence initiated by the PQ. It is even more surprising since the current head of the CSN, Gerald LaRose has made his ardent nationalism and close ties with the PQ leadership no secret.

The CSN sees sovereignty as a social project more promising than anything that could happen in the status quo of the Canadian federation. In a document entitled, "A clear Choice for the CSN: The sovereignty of Québec" the CSN maintains that "sovereignty poses favourable conditions for the emer-

gence of a social consensus which includes local, regional and national interests.... That is why we believe that sovereignty is a social project for Québec, today and tomorrow."

Roy explains that the struggle for Québec independence has been historically linked to the labour movement's efforts to break away from the domination of foreign control of capital in the province.

In the development of this struggle, "the unions became the spokespeople for independence in Québec — independence in the broad sense, financial and political."

For the past 14 years, members of the CSN have expressed the nationalism of Québec's labour movement by voting for a pro-sovereignty position in annual congresses.

However, the recent wind of "neo-liberalism" has been taken up by the PQ. For Roy, this is indicative of the PQ's lack of social orientation.

"Do we want to give our country a government that is not capable of protecting the health and social services sector? People do not want to construct a country founded on the ruins of the education system," Roy says.

That Gerald La Rose and the CSN are asking different questions and have both criticised the FAS for using "misplaced union tactics," underscores the fundamental difference between their visions, according to Begely.

"The CSN makes a distinction that it is not a political question — PQ or no PQ, [Québec] must go towards independence."

The FAS, on the other hand, will not, accept "sovereignty for sovereignty's sake," Begely explains.

"Change for change's sake," asserts Begely, "is scary, while change with some plan is different."

Demoralising workers

In its May conference, the FAS proposed a series of strikes to be held by the hospital union members to counter the Rochon reforms.

The proposal was defeated, with most unions preferring to keep quiet and engage in negotiations instead. While LaRose saw this as an endorsement of his view that the reforms are redeemable, Roy and Begely saw

it as an indication that workers have been demoralised.

Roy sees this as a phenomenon occurring across Canada. "The ordinary person, coast to coast in Canada, is not saying anything" about the economic priority that the governments in the provinces and in Canada have taken, says Roy.

"These economic orientations are purported by the politician and the media. They are then anchored into the population — our members included.... They think that 'it is necessary to reduce the deficit' and 'it is necessary to reduce services'"

This has meant, continues Roy, that since 1982, "there have been cuts to jobs, no provision for replacements, wage freezes and hiring freezes. Since 1982 we have not been able to successfully fight this phenomenon."

Roy's views echo those taken by the former FAS president, Sylvio Robinson: the public service workers in Québec suffer from a "virus of defeat."

Ironically, Rochon himself declared that one of the problems faced by the public sector is the demoralisation of personnel.

For Roy, "these pretty words," matched with the blatant contradiction of the health package, "show that Rochon has no vision."

Roy points out that "those who work in the hospitals are under great pressure right now. There is a will in our members to leave the public sector."

The attack from all sides of the governing parties, the PQ being no exception, means that "the public sector is no longer a meaningful place for people where they feel they can develop themselves."

The FAS, however, remains pro-sovereigntist. "We do believe that in an independent Québec there is more of a chance for the working class to gain ground because there is a certain decentralisation of power."

But Roy remains wary of the PQ as the governing body of an independent Québec.

"People have to realise that the referendum is not an election; it opens up the future of Québec and this is not the future of a group in society, nor the future of a political party, nor that of one particular person. It is the future all Quebecers."

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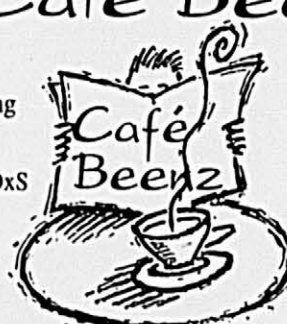
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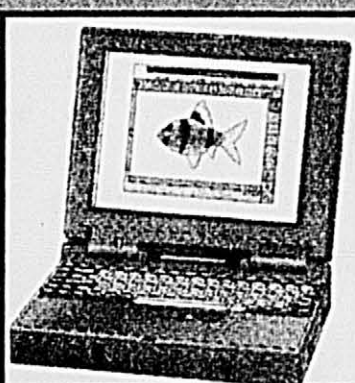
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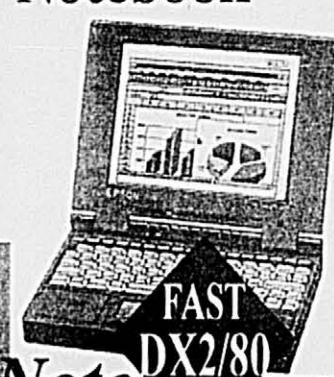
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